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EUROPE & PACIFIC

WEEKEND EDITION



NFL DRAFT

Clemson linebacker Simmons is built to thrive against high-powered modern offenses

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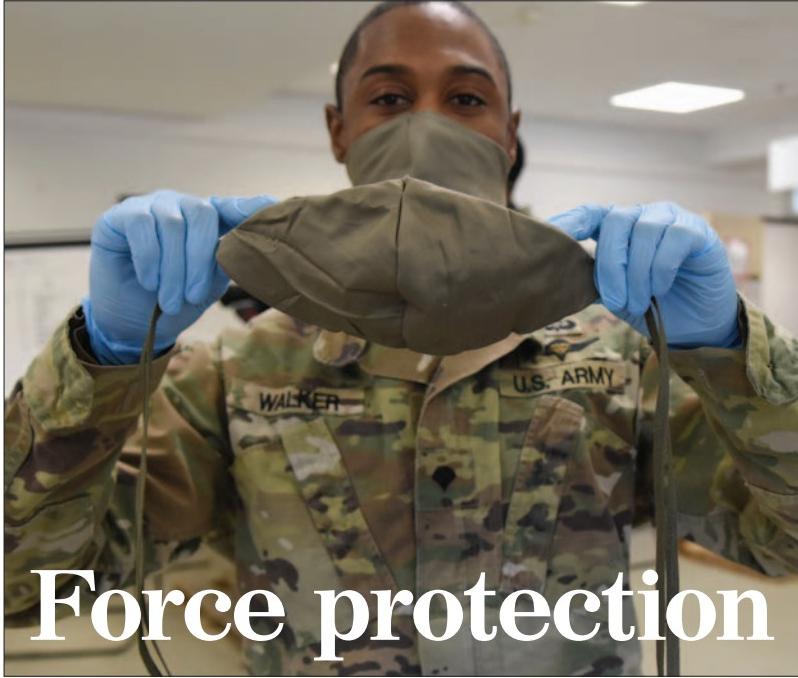
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VIRUS OUTBREAK



Force protection

Army parachute riggers, civilians in Kaiserslautern improvise face masks

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Sewing machines continue to hum inside the workshop at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, where U.S. Army parachute riggers who normally mend torn canopies have taken up a new project: face masks.

The 5th Quartermaster-Theater Aerial De-

livery Company soldiers have produced about 150 a day since Monday, as part of an effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

The first batches of masks have been distributed to cooks, gate guards, postal workers and finance specialists — essential workers in jobs where social distancing is difficult, soldiers said this week.

[SEE PROTECTION ON PAGE 8](#)

Spc. Robert Walker, a parachute rigger with the 5th Quartermaster-Theater Aerial Delivery Company at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, Germany, holds up one of the masks he and fellow parachute riggers made this week from bed sheets and parachute rigging.

JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

RELATED STORIES

6th USS Theodore Roosevelt sailor with coronavirus taken to hospital

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Base in South Korea aims to ease restrictions

[Page 7](#)

Get the latest news on the virus outbreak

[stripes.com/coronavirus](#)

Claims for jobless aid in US reach 22 million

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The wave of layoffs that has engulfed the U.S. economy since the coronavirus struck forced 5.2 million more people to seek unemployment benefits last week, the government reported Thursday.

Roughly 22 million have sought jobless benefits in the past month — the worst stretch of U.S. job losses on record. It means that roughly one in seven workers have lost their jobs in that time.

The grim figures point to an economy that is tumbling into what appears to be a calamitous recession, the worst in decades. The nation's output could shrink by roughly 10.5% before it starts to rebound, according to Ryan Sweet, an economist at Moody's Analytics.

[SEE JOBLESS ON PAGE 10](#)



RICK BOWMER/AP

A sign reflecting the bleak state of business hangs in the window of Locust Tattoo on Tuesday in Salt Lake City. Millions of Americans are newly unemployed because of coronavirus-related shutdowns.

Millions of relief checks delayed by glitches

[Page 10](#)

BUSINESS/WEATHER

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	Azores Change in price	Belgium Change in price	Turkey Change in price	\$2.992 --	--
Germany	\$2116	\$2.579	\$2.825	\$2.770	--	--	--	\$2.992	--
Change in price	-7.1 cents	-7.6 cents	-7.3 cents	-4.1 cents				-6.0 cents	
Netherlands	--	\$3.123	\$3.084	\$2.884	--	--	\$2.834	\$2.866	\$2.752
Change in price		+2.3 cents	+2.5 cents	+2.6 cents			No change	No change	No change
U.K.	--	\$2.46	\$2.735	\$2.680	Turkey	--	--	\$2.626	\$2.571*
Change in price		-7.6 cents	-7.3 cents	-4.1 cents				-7.3 cents	-4.1 cents

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel	South Korea Change in price	Guam Change in price	\$1.939 --	\$2.649 --	\$2.589 --
Japan	--	\$2.619	\$2.550	\$2.550	South Korea Change in price	Guam Change in price	\$1.939 --	\$2.649	\$2.589
Change in price		-7.0 cents	--	-4.0 cents			-7.0 cents	-7.0 cents	-4.0 cents
Okinawa	\$1.909	--	--	\$2.559	Guam Change in price	\$1.919**	\$2.379	\$2.629	--
Change in price	-7.0 cents	--	--	-4.0 cents		-7.0 cents	-8.0 cents	-7.0 cents	--

* Diesel E10 ** Midgrade
For the week of April 17-23

EXCHANGE RATES

	Military rate	Switzerland (Franc).....	0.9666
Euro (cents) (April 17)	\$1.06	Thailand (Baht).....	32.63
Dollar buys (April 17)	€0.89	Turkey (Lira).....	6.9402
British pound (April 17)	£1.22	(More exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check the local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to U.S. dollars, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	
Chinese yen (April 17)	104.00		
South Korean won (April 17)	1,196.00		
	Commercial rates		
Bahrain (Dinar).....	0.3773		
British pound.....	\$1.2907		
China (Yuan).....	7.0734		
Denmark (Krone).....	6.8599		
Egypt (Pound).....	15.7842		
Hong Kong (Dollar).....	\$1.0879		
Hungary (Forint).....	7.7506		
Iceland (Icelandic króna).....	322.00		
Japan (Yen).....	31.70		
Kuwait (Dinar).....	0.3114		
Norway (Krone).....	10.4563		
Poland (Złoty).....	4.07		
Poland (Złoty).....	4.17		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal).....	3.7571		
Singapore (Dollar).....	1.4279		
South Korea (Won).....	1,226.38		

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate.....	3.15
Discount rate.....	0.25
Federal funds market rate.....	0.05
3-month bill.....	0.15
30-year bond.....	1.27

WEATHER OUTLOOK

FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



FRIDAY IN EUROPE



SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

TODAY IN STRIPES

STARS AND STRIPES

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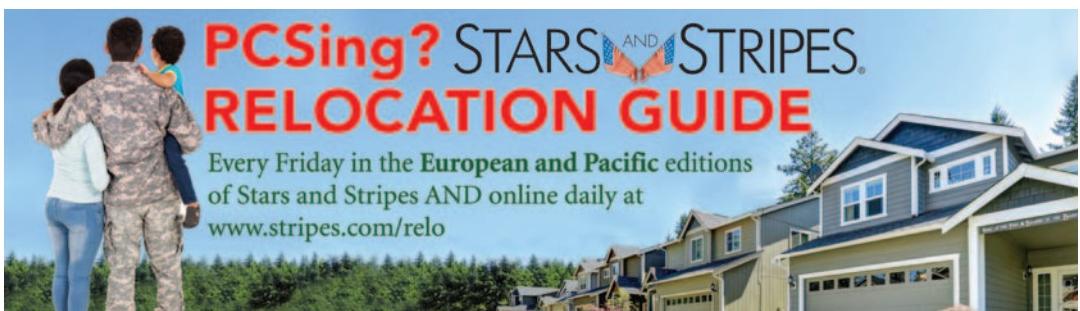
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MILITARY

Navy: Russian jet maneuver risked collision

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A Russian fighter jet risked a midair collision when it intercepted a Navy aircraft at close range over the Mediterranean Sea on Wednesday, military officials said.

A U.S. P-8A Poseidon aircraft, used for tracking submarines, was flying in international airspace when a Russian SU-35 performed a high-speed, inverted maneuver 25 feet in front of the Navy plane, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa said in a statement.

The encounter with the Russian fighter, which caused turbulence aboard the P-8A, lasted for 42 minutes.

"Unsafe actions increase the risk of miscalculation and potential for midair collisions," NAVFUR said. "The U.S. aircraft was operating consistent with international law and did not provoke this Russian activity."

In Europe, risky encounters with Russian military aircraft have occurred on occasion in recent years, most notably in the Black Sea. But the latest action also comes as the U.S. military contends with the coronavirus.

The U.S. has been forced to cancel numerous military exercises and training plans because of the virus, raising concerns that adversaries could use the crisis as an opportunity to test American military readiness.

The latest incident with the Russians comes one week after U.S. Air Force F-22 fighter jets intercepted a pair of Russian maritime patrol planes 50 miles off the western coast of the Aleutian Islands, in what military officials said at the time was a test of U.S. capabilities amid the coronavirus pandemic.

And on Wednesday, 11 Iranian military vessels moved dangerously close to several American ships conducting operations in the northern Persian Gulf, the Navy said.

Last week, as coronavirus cases surged in the ranks, Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley issued a warning to rivals.

"I wouldn't want any mixed messages going out there to any adversaries that they can take advantage of an opportunity,

if you will, at a time of crisis," Milley said. "That would be a terrible and tragic mistake if they thought that."

Navy crews operating in Europe are taking precautionary measures to guard against the coronavirus, the service said.

This week, Rota, Spain-based destroyers maneuvered in the Black and Baltic seas, while the P-8A Poseidon flew its Mediterranean mission.

"U.S. 6th Fleet remains at sea, ensuring maritime security and demonstrating our continued ability to operate in concert with allies and partners across the European theater," Vice Adm. Lisa Franchetti said in a statement Tuesday.

vandiver.john@stripes.com
Twitter: @John_vandiver

Navy says 11 Iranian ships harass 6 US ships in Persian Gulf

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Eleven Iranian military ships on Wednesday maneuvered dangerously close to several American ships conducting operations in the northern Persian Gulf, according to the Navy.

The Iranian ships "repeatedly conducted dangerous and harassing approaches" of six U.S. ships: the USS Lewis B. Puller, an expeditionary mobile base platform ship; the USS Paul Hamilton, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer; the USS Firebolt and the USS Sirococo, cyclone-class coastal patrol ships; and the USCGC Wrangell and the USCGC Maui, U.S. Coast Guard island-class cutters.

The ships were identified as Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy vessels in a statement Wednesday by U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet.

"The vessels repeatedly crossed the bows and sterns of the U.S.

vessels at extremely close range and high speeds, including multiple crossings of the Puller with a 50-yard closest point of approach and within 10 yards of Maui's bow," the Navy said.

The American ships were conducting joint-integration operations in international waters with Army AH-64E Apache attack helicopters, according to the Navy statement. The joint operations have been conducted in the northern Persian Gulf since late March. The Navy also conducted operations with an Air Force special operations gunship last month as part of stepped up U.S. and allied efforts to deter what American officials have said are mounting Iranian threats in the region.

Images posted by the 5th Fleet of the incident show what look like speed boats conducting close passes and tight turns around the U.S. ships.

The American sailors gave multiple warnings to the Iranian ships through bridge-to-bridge



Iranian Revolutionary Guard ships conducted unsafe and unprofessional actions against U.S. military ships operating in international waters of the North Arabian Gulf on Wednesday.

radio, five short horn blasts and "long-range acoustic noise marker devices," the Navy said, receiving no response for an hour.

The Iranian ships eventually responded to the bridge-to-bridge

radio messages and moved away from the American ships.

"The [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy's] dangerous and provocative actions increased the risk of miscalculation and

collision," the Navy said, adding their actions were not in accordance with maritime customs or international law for ship safety.

*Stars and Stripes staff writer Chad Garland contributed to this story.
kenney.caitlin@stripes.com*

Guard units in Wisconsin, Alabama awarded F-35 fighter jets

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Air National Guard units based in Wisconsin and Alabama have been awarded squadrons of F-35 fighter jets, the U.S. Air Force announced Wednesday, overcoming vocal opposition from people who live near the base in Wisconsin's capital city.

The jets will be placed with the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing at Truax Field in Madison and with the 187th Fighter Wing at Dannelly Field in Montgomery, Ala. The first jets are expected to arrive in late 2023.

The jets will replace older F-16 aircraft and will allow the Air Force to meet other requirements for readiness and training, the Air Force said in a statement.

Locating the jets in Madison has divided

the state and community over the past three years, with many people who live near the airport saying noise and pollution from the jets will lessen their quality of life and value of their homes. The Air Force said in a preliminary report that noise from the F-35s could make more than 1,000 homes "incompatible for residential use."

But there was a broad base of support that included businesses, communities, economic developers, office holders, veterans and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Supporters argued that concerns over the noise are overblown and there won't be much difference from the current F-16s. Advocates said having the next generation of jets will be an economic development boost, ensuring the future of the base in Madison, which employs about 1,200 people.

Madison's City Council passed a resolution opposing the jets, but the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce has been a vocal supporter. The chamber, which represents businesses in Madison, said the Air National Guard wing has a \$100 million annual economic impact on the community. There was also bipartisan support from Wisconsin politicians, including both its Democratic and Republican U.S. senators.

Rep. Mark Pocan, a Democrat who represents Madison, said Wednesday that the Air Force never sufficiently addressed his request that the Air Force pay for soundproofing or any financial losses those who live near the base may suffer due to reduced property values.

And Democratic state Rep. Chris Taylor, one of the most vocal critics of the jets,

called placing them in a Madison an "unfortunate and harmful decision" that will hurt people's health, quality of life and lower property values.

"Instead of listening to our community, the Air Force is intent on foisting these jets on a place they are not wanted," she said.

Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp, leader of the Wisconsin National Guard, praised the awarding of the jets to the base in Madison and said he looked forward to working in partnership with the city and surrounding communities.

"Through collaboration, I'm confident we will continue to be good stewards of the communities in which we work and live," he said.

Three other bases considered for the jets were in Boise, Idaho; Harrison Township, Mich.; and Jacksonville, Fla.

WAR/MILITARY

SIGAR: Recommendations going unheeded

BY J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

The Pentagon has followed less than half of recent recommendations made by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, a report by the watchdog group released Thursday said.

SIGAR has issued more than 200 recommendations since 2014 on how to improve oversight and prevent fraud, waste and abuse in Afghanistan, with the Pentagon implementing 84 of them, the report said.

Some have languished for 20 months or more without being addressed and others are so overdue that SIGAR has determined the Pentagon will never respond.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Army offers guidance on housing

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Soldiers stopped by the coronavirus pandemic from moving to new locations should attempt to work with their landlords to remain in their housing through the outbreak, Army officials said.

Service officials acknowledged Wednesday that, in some cases, soldiers might run into problems with housing and the Army is working to help troops mitigate issues that they could face with landlords at either the current location or their planned next-duty station. Army lawyers have drafted letters that soldiers can provide to landlords in an effort to solve any lease-agreement disputes, said Lt. Gen. Doug Gabram, the chief of Army Installation Management Command.

"We're kind of in the process to work through that, quite frankly," the general said during a telephone news briefing from his headquarters at Joint Base San Antonio. "The housing aspect of this whole crisis is emotional with the stop-move [orders]. We've had people moving here, now they're not moving, they're staying."

And they could be staying for

quite some time.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Tuesday that he would extend the orders halting nearly all official international and domestic movements for service members, their families and Defense Department civilians past May 11, when they were initially set to expire.

The Pentagon has not announced a new target date for the travel restrictions to end, but some military leaders have acknowledged they could remain in place well into the summer.

Gabram said Wednesday that he expected the opening of travel and other activities at American military bases worldwide would occur gradually, based on the outbreak's impacts in their local areas.

"It's not a cookie cutter [solution]," he said. "I'd like to wave a wand and it's all going to be the same on one day. I don't believe it's going to go like that."

The Army had taken some steps to help the thousands of soldiers stuck in place amid the pandemic.

Among the new measures, the Army is allowing soldiers who like their current assignment to request to remain in it for up to

one additional year, canceling their planned permanent-change-of-station orders.

Federal law protects active-duty service members from facting penalties for breaking their leases to move to a new duty station or deploy for more than 90 days. But it does not require landlords to extend leases or reinstate previous agreements for troops whose plans change — including under unusual circumstances such as the stop-motion orders meant to help thwart the coronavirus pandemic.

The guidance issued April 7 on lease issues caused by the stop-motion orders instructs a soldier who cannot come to terms with a landlord to contact their chain of command and Army attorneys at their installation.

If a soldier cannot reach an agreement with a landlord to remain in their current housing, the soldier could request the Army pay for them to move to a nearby location, said Melissa Halsey, the legal assistance policy division chief for the Army's judge advocate general.

The Army can authorize such short-distance moves when soldiers are forced to stay at their current assignment without being

given a choice, she said.

For soldiers who have already signed leases for their next assignments, Halsey said they also should attempt to resolve it with their landlord or property managers before seeking Army legal assistance.

"We are suggesting service members contact their landlords directly and explain their situation," she said. "They should then ask the landlord to end their lease voluntarily."

Ultimately, Army lawyers could work with Human Resources Command to issue new orders with a delayed PCS date, which could allow soldiers to terminate those leases through the federal Service Member Civil Relief Act, she said.

Gabram said installation commanders across the service were engaged with soldiers and community leaders in the areas around their posts to work to help soldiers dealing with the crisis.

"They understand that folks may have a problem financially ... or housing-wise," he said. "We have to work through that. We have to do the right thing."

corey.dickstein@stripes.com
Twitter: @CDickstein

Soldiers deploy to NJ for aid effort

Associated Press

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — More soldiers from Fort Campbell have deployed to help with coronavirus relief efforts.

About 10 soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division's sustainment brigade deployed this week to New Jersey to help with coordinating and supporting Army logistical efforts in the region, according to a statement from the Army post on the Kentucky-Tennessee line.

"I am incredibly proud of our sustainment Soldiers from the Lifeline brigade, and I know they are going to have a big impact to our nation's response against COVID," said Maj. Gen. Brian Winkins, commanding general, 101st Airborne Division and Fort Campbell. "Sustainment is absolutely critical to ensure front line medical personnel are well supplied and able to continue their vital work."

The troops are ready to conduct operations in more locations if necessary, he said.

Fort Campbell also deployed about 300 soldiers last month from the 531st Hospital Center to New York.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

6th sailor from carrier moved to hospital on Guam

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A sixth sailor assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt and fighting the coronavirus has been hospitalized on Guam, the Navy announced Thursday, as cases of the disease surpass 650 among the crew.

The sailor is being treated at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam, where five other sailors were transferred this week. One sailor remains in intensive care for observation due to shortness of breath.

The cases follow the death Monday of a Roosevelt sailor who had been in intensive care after being found unresponsive April 9 while in quarantine on Guam. The sailor has not yet been identified, pending notification of next of kin.

As of Thursday, there are 655 Roosevelt sailors with positive tests for the virus. Most of the about 4,800 member crew has been tested, with 3,919 receiving a negative result. About 4,059 sailors have been transferred from the ship to Guam. The Navy has 983 cases of the virus among its military personnel.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Wednesday during an interview with Fox News that once the aircraft carrier has been cleaned as a result of the virus outbreak, the ship will return to sea in a few weeks.

The Roosevelt has been in port in Guam since March 27 after an outbreak of the virus aboard

the nuclear-powered carrier diverted it during a scheduled deployment.

Capt. Brett Crozier, the former commander of the Roosevelt, was fired April 2 after his emailed letter about the ship's virus outbreak was leaked to the media. Then acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly, who resigned amid the Roosevelt controversy, initiated an investigation into Crozier's actions and the climate of Pacific Fleet "to help determine what may have contributed to this breakdown in the chain of command," he said at the time.

Esper said Wednesday that the investigation was completed last week and it will be reviewed by new acting Navy Secretary James McPherson this week. Esper said he will see the report sometime after that.

In a message to sailors Thursday, Adm. Robert Burke, the vice chief of naval operations, said the Navy's goal is to deploy ships with no cases of the coronavirus. However, the nature of the virus makes it difficult to achieve that goal.

Burke cited measures such as social distancing and staying home that can help stop the virus's spread.

"We understand these measures are especially challenging in a shipboard environment, but they are not impossible. We need your complete cooperation to pull together as we fight this virus," he said in the message.

Kenney.Caitlin@stripes.com



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

The USNS Mercy hospital ship enters the Port of Los Angeles, on March 27. Mercy may scale back its mission as the workload stabilizes at area hospitals.

Hospital ship might scale back

BY LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The USNS Mercy hospital ship docked in Los Angeles may be able to scale back its medical operation a bit over the next week as the coronavirus workload at area hospitals stabilizes, according to the ship's captain and military documents.

The Mercy will also send about 40 medical staff to a regional skilled nursing facility on Monday, Navy Capt. John Rotruck, the ship's commander, said Wednesday in an interview with The Associated Press. He said elderly patients will not be brought to the ship, despite earlier suggestions that could happen.

Rotruck said a plan under discussion would reduce the num-

ber of available hospital beds on the Navy ship from 1,000 to 250. Documents reviewed by the AP said the plan could free up medical staff that could then go to other missions.

Two weeks ago, California officials were planning for a potential crush of coronavirus cases that by mid-May could that could require adding up to 66,000 additional hospital beds. The Mercy was part of the ramp-up effort, but since then, hospitalizations have leveled off and ample rooms are available.

The ship left San Diego on March 23 and arrived in Los Angeles four days later to provide relief by taking patients who were not infected with the virus.

Many of the worst outbreaks now occurring are in nursing

facilities, and some are having staffing issues as workers are infected or stay home.

Rotruck said there has been no final decision, but 250 beds would be a reasonable size to maintain. He said that "probably in the neighborhood of 100 or more people" could be made available for other missions, as a result of the reduction in beds. He said no decisions have been made on where medical staff may go.

"I'm not surprised if it happens," he said, adding that 51 patients have been treated on the ship since it arrived and 17 were on board as of Wednesday. The ship has seen an average of 20 to 21 people a day.

Reducing the Mercy's capacity, he said, won't hurt its ability to relieve local hospitals.

2 American sailors among 668 in French strike group to test positive

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

Two U.S. sailors are among the 668 crewmembers assigned to a French navy strike group who have tested positive for coronavirus, the French and U.S. navies announced Wednesday.

The two were part of a team of four U.S. sailors embedded on the French aircraft carrier FS Charles de Gaulle as part of the Navy's personnel exchange program, according to the Navy's most recent daily coronavirus update.

The de Gaulle leads the strike group, which includes multiple frigates, a command and refueling vessel and a nuclear-powered attack submarine, according to a Jan. 23 USNI News report.

"As part of the [personnel exchange] program, sailors are integrated into the French crew in all daily operations, which include



JOSHUA LEONARD/U.S. Navy

Two U.S. sailors have tested positive for the coronavirus while assigned to the French aircraft carrier FS Charles de Gaulle, seen here in 2019.

medical care, if needed," according to the U.S. Navy update.

The ill U.S. sailors are being treated with "excellent host natural medical care at French facilities," according to the update.

"We are confident that our Sailors are in good hands," it added.

The French navy said, "the

great majority" of the 668 positive tests for the virus were among sailors aboard the de Gaulle, according to a statement Thursday. Of the sailors who tested positive, 31 are hospitalized. The statement did not specify the other French ships affected by the virus.

The 668 number is a stark jump

from last week, when France's Armed Forces Ministry in a tweet April 10 announced 50 de Gaulle sailors had tested positive for the coronavirus. Three of those sailors were evacuated "as a precaution, by plane, and transferred to a hospital in France," according to a translation of the message.

The outbreak prompted the de Gaulle and its strike group to return early to their Toulon, France, homeport April 13, the ministry said in a tweet Thursday. The ship had been deployed since January and "had already achieved its operation objectives" when the decision was made to return to port, according to a translation of the message.

Teams are working to disinfect the ships and aircraft, and the remaining sailors are being tested, the ministry said in the Thursday tweet.

About 2,000 sailors are assigned to the carrier. The de

Gaulle is the only non-U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in the world.

All de Gaulle sailors are undergoing a 14-day quarantine at the French naval bases in Toulon, according to the French navy statement.

The U.S. Navy in its Wednesday coronavirus update said it is "working closely with our NATO Ally to fight against the virus."

"We look forward to continued operations with the Charles de Gaulle and the French Navy in the future," it said.

The de Gaulle outbreak mimicked that of the USS Theodore Roosevelt, which was sidelined at Guam on March 26 after eight sailors on the ship tested positive for the coronavirus. As of Wednesday, that number had grown to 615 positive cases, according to the Navy update.

doornbos.caitlin@stripes.com
Twitter: @CaitlinDoornbos

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Airmen boost academics during pandemic

BY JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

At an Air Force base in California famous for pushing the envelope, senior enlisted leaders have devised a social media method of keeping work-at-home airmen around the world connected and learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

Ian Eischen, the command chief master sergeant of the 412th Test Wing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., conceived the idea along with Master Sgt. Chad Hardesty and Tech. Sgt. Fabian Guzman.

"We built this group with the idea of crowdsourcing education across the Air Force," Eischen said in an April 7 email to Stars and Stripes. "We have leaders at all levels with knowledge to give, and Airmen at all levels with time and a desire to learn but we needed a place that would allow these two groups to find each other."

The group has more than 18,000 members and has hosted multiple video chats with enlisted leaders from across the Air Force. Topics discussed have included mental health, bullet writing for evaluations and emotional intelligence. All the videos created are available on the page.

The group's decentralized nature makes it one of the best ideas to stem from the lockdown, said Tech. Sgt. Cam Kopiec, the noncommissioned officer in charge of cyber systems support for the 18th Intelligence Squadron at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, in an email to Stars and Stripes on Monday.

"This is not something that was directed by the chief of staff or the Air Force or the command chief master sergeant of the Air Force," he said. "This was born out of a desire to help others and better our force. We're all in unfamiliar situations right now, and we don't have all the specifics as to where we may return back to a sense of normalcy. Personal and professional development is one of the biggest things we can take from this 'downtime.' It's amazing how the group is doing it."

Kopiec said he discovered Quarantine University through others in his unit already taking advantage of it.

"I attended one of the leadership workshops that was put on shortly after the quarantine started, promptly joined the Facebook group, and since then it has been an absolute trove of information," he said.

Although many of the classes focus on

improving leadership qualities, Kopiec said there are webinars, training and meetups on a variety of topics. It's fascinating to see how everyone bought in quickly and is focused on helping others, he said.

Quarantine University has hosted speakers from outside of the Air Force, too.

For example, on Wednesday, award-winning author Whitney Johnson, a frequent lecturer at Harvard Business School, spoke about her book: "Disrupt Yourself: Put the Power of Disruptive Innovation to Work."

Several of the live training sessions, such as "Hybrid Airmen" and "The Future of the Enlisted Force," were attended by more than 9,000 people, Eischen said.

Hybrid airmen, a concept unveiled in 2018 by Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kalabeth Wright, calls for creating service members able to take on multiple roles during a major conflict.

"In the future, especially against a near-peer adversary, we will need hybrid airmen who have more skills than the ones they learned through their career field," Eischen said. "The current COVID-19 situation is an excellent-use case to test this hypothesis."

Quarantine University allows airmen to

choose their own adventure and focus on their development, he said.

"We have Airmen across the base who are training to augment security forces, command post, medical and other critical jobs," he said. "We also have Airmen with varying backgrounds who are learning iterative design and fundamentals of prototyping who are now building robots to help disinfect rooms and various surfaces."

The group's success has hinged on the dynamic communication of social media platforms like Facebook, Zoom and Meet-up, Eischen said, although the Defense Department recently directed all personnel to stop using Zoom for security reasons.

"Social media has been key to this project, and it would not have grown this fast without it. We launched and had 2,000 users within 24 hours," he said. "It is easy for anyone to provide content because we are able to live-stream from a smartphone."

Those interested in checking out Quarantine University can find it at www.facebook.com/groups/574695376589462/.

*bolinger.james@stripes.com
Twitter: @bolingerj2004*

Camp Humphreys to slowly reopen gyms, barbershops

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — As the daily count of coronavirus cases declines in South Korea, Camp Humphreys will take a step toward normalcy this weekend by reopening gyms, barbershops and some other services, the commander said Thursday.

Anticipating crowds, Garrison commander Col. Michael Tremblay said military standards for haircuts would be phased back in slowly.

"What we don't want to have is a rush on the barbershop," he said in a community update via Facebook live. "We know you're all shaggy out there and that's fine."

"We're going to do this deliberately. So you're going to get at least a week before there's going to be any type of haircut inspection," he said.

U.S. service members have been largely holed up in barracks or off-base residences for about three weeks after a soldier and several American contractors at Camp Humphreys tested positive for the virus, which can cause severe lung illness.

The largest overseas Army garrison, which is home to the military headquarters on the divided peninsula and a population of more than 37,000, closed several services and restricted on-base movement in response. Nearby Osan Air Base followed suit after three cases.

In all, 24 people linked to USFK

have tested positive for the virus, including two soldiers.

But the overall pace of infections across South Korea has slowed, with only 22 new infections logged on Wednesday, the eighth day that the daily count was below 50.

On Thursday, USFK commander Gen. Robert Abrams authorized Camp Humphreys and Osan Air Base to return to Health Protection Condition C from C+, meaning they can lift some restrictions on a limited basis, beginning Saturday.

Abrams planned to address the community via Facebook live on Friday, USFK officials said.

Even as some restrictions begin to be lifted, social distancing begins standards and requirements to wear face masks, frequently wash hands and disinfect gym equipment will continue to be enforced, Tremblay said.

The number of people allowed into the commissary and post exchange also will continue to be limited, often meaning long lines of people standing several feet apart.

"We are on to the next evolution and the establishment of a new normal," Tremblay said. "We're not going away from all the hard lessons we've learned as we really beat this thing down."

The gyms and the 18-hole golf course will be open for active-duty service members and their dependents only in the beginning, he said.

On-post bus services will resume with soldiers as drivers, but taxis will remain halted for the time being.

The barbershops and hair and nail salons will reopen, and some restaurants will resume sit-down service, he said.

Food courts will remain take-out-only, but a new service allowing food to be ordered in advance and picked up curbside will be implemented. A similar service has been launched by the PX.

The theater will reopen Saturday, as will the bowling alley,

although with every other lane closed for social distancing. Several administrative services will resume activities on Monday.

Restrictions on access and nonessential activities outside all bases will remain in place.

gamel.kim@stripes.com

'We know you're all shaggy out there and that's fine.'

Col. Michael Tremblay
Camp Humphreys garrison commander

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Protection: Supply crunch leads to use of bedsheets to make masks

FROM FRONT PAGE

"Obviously, we don't want to have those essential operations shut down," said Capt. Tom Barcomb, 5th Quartermaster-TADCO commander. "We want people to do as little as possible."

The Pentagon this month ordered troops to wear masks when they're unable to maintain 6 feet of social distance, following a sharp rise in coronavirus infections among the ranks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which initially didn't recommend wearing masks, changed its guidance this month to lower the risk of people with mild or no symptoms from spreading the virus.

At the riggers' workshop, 14 soldiers work on alternating days; five operate sewing machines at a time while two soldiers stencil and cut fabric. One mask takes up to about 10 minutes to produce.

Stitching together face coverings on commercial sewing machines is easier than repairing parachutes and rigging on the industrial-size machines the soldiers typically use, they said, and they're easier to repair when they go down.

"There have been some guys who have not sewn in a couple of years and they're sitting down and using the machines," said Warrant Officer Alejandro Vaquero, an air drop systems technician with the 5th Parachute Company.

The soldiers use a combination of straight and locking stitches.

"I'm enjoying it. Every single one gets a little better," said Spc. Robert Walker, a parachute rigger.

Across town at the Kaiserslautern Army Depot, a similar assembly line is producing masks for the 1,300 civilians in the Theater Logistics Support Center Europe, including mechanics, truck drivers and craftsmen in the mostly

German workforce.

The unit has had a few confirmed cases of the virus, including a longtime German employee who died after contracting the virus last month.

"We thought (to do this for) preservation of the workforce and support of the soldiers," said David Little, the operational division chief of Supply Activity Europe.

On Wednesday, his employees turned out 240 face masks cut from green fabric used to make coveralls.

The riggers at Rhine Ordnance Barracks had to be creative in finding fabric. T-shirts didn't work; the thicker cotton bunched in the sewing machines. With fabric stores closed locally due to the virus, the soldiers purchased bedsheets in subdued colors at the Ramstein and Baumholder exchange stores, Vaquero said.

Each sheet set yields 59 double-layered masks wide enough to cover the mouth and nose, he said.

The masks tie in the back with straps the shop uses for rigging. Velcro was the first choice but Vaquero bought it all from the BX last week and the shop quickly ran out.

They're issuing two masks to each soldier and don't know how many they'll end up making.

"We're kind of treating this like indefinite demand, indefinite quantity," Barcomb said.

The Army on Wednesday said units could start ordering more face coverings through the Defense Logistics Agency, said Master Sgt. Dan Bailey, 21st Theater Sustainment Command spokesman.

The locally made masks are a "temporary solution" until the DLA-issued masks arrive at an undetermined date, Bailey said. www.jennifer@stripes.com
Twitter:@stripesktown



PHOTOS BY JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Sgt. Nicholas August, a parachute rigger with the 5th Quartermaster-Theater Aerial Delivery Company at Rhine Ordnance Barracks, Germany, sews a face mask together Wednesday.



Elastic bands are sewn on face masks at a workshop at Kaiserslautern Army Depot in Germany.



Sgt. Jonathan Camacho, left, and Staff Sgt. Kyle Shields, parachute riggers with the 5th Quartermaster-Theater Aerial Delivery Company, cut out fabric to be sewed into face masks.

DODEA College Board cancels SAT exams slated for June

Stars and Stripes

Almost as soon as students at Defense Department high schools overseas could crack a book, the College Board has canceled all the SAT tests scheduled for June 6.

The June date was set to replace dates in March canceled due to concerns over the coronavirus. The SAT is one of the two college admissions exams taken by high school seniors and rising juniors.

The board plans instead to administer the SAT on one day each month from August through December, according to the SAT website.

However, the ACT admissions tests are still scheduled for June 13 at Defense Department schools in Japan and Guam, said Miranda Ferguson, a spokeswoman for Department of Defense Education Activity-Pacific, in an email Thursday. Eligible students may register for that test until

May 5.

The announcements that admissions exams had been rescheduled for June came with a caveat that continuing concerns over coronavirus could change those plans.

Pacific East schools, all in Japan, that plan to offer the ACT are Yokota High School at Yokota Air Base; Zama American Middle/High School at Camp Zama; Edgren Middle/High School at Misawa Air Base; Kinnick High School at Yokosuka

Naval Base; and E.J. King High School at Sasebo Naval Base.

In the Pacific South district, the ACT test is scheduled at Kadena High School at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, and at Guam High School in Agana Heights.

Information on what schools in Europe were still planning to administer the ACT before the end of this school year was not immediately available.

news@stripes.com

Japanese prime minister broadens stay-at-home order to whole country

Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan's state of emergency has been expanded to the whole country from seven prefectures, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Thursday, as the novel coronavirus crisis deepens.

Everyone in Japan needs to reduce their social contacts by 80%

in order to stem new infections, Abe urged, as the number of cases climbed to nearly 10,000, including 712 on a cruise ship quarantined near Tokyo in February.

About 180 people in Japan have died of COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the virus.

The government "needs to take measures to keep the flow of people to minimum" before

this year's Golden Week holidays that start in late April, Yasutoshi Nishimura, the country's economic minister, told a government meeting.

Abe's government has been criticized for hiding the true number of coronavirus cases by limiting tests.

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare had focused on clus-

ters of coronavirus cases instead of testing as many people as possible.

The declaration requests — not orders — residents to stay at home, meaning there will be no punishment for those who do not comply with the measures aimed at containing the spread of the coronavirus.

So, even after the declara-

tion, many people still went to work in major cities in the seven prefectures.

The government and local leaders urged people to work from home, but many Japanese companies still did not allow telework.

On Thursday, Abe also said the government will provide cash handouts of 925 dollars to all citizens.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Veterans homes in 16 states report positive virus cases

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The coronavirus has taken hold in long-term care facilities across the country and caused thousands of deaths — including state-run homes for aging veterans and their family members.

Veterans homes in 16 states had reported at least one case of the virus as of Tuesday, said Mark Bowman, president of the National Association of State Veterans Homes. The association, with 157 members, provides support for state veterans homes, which receive payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs based on the number of residents.

Bowman said it was hard to get a full accounting of the positive cases among residents and staff of veterans homes, which have proved to be ideal places for the virus to spread. While he's asked members to alert him to cases in their facilities, Bowman believes some have not yet reported because they're busy responding to crises.

"This thing is going so quick," Bowman said. "When it strikes a state veterans home, their sole purpose is making sure residents are safe. Other communication doesn't come as quick."

At the Holyoke Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, 36 residents had died of the virus as of Tuesday. The state government and U.S. Justice Department are investigating whether leadership failed in its response.

According to local news reports Wednesday, there were 45 positive cases of the coronavirus in two of Alabama's four veterans homes, as well as two deaths. In New Jersey, the Paramus Veterans Memorial Home was overwhelmed with sick residents, and more than two dozen had died as of Tuesday.

National Guard members and medical staff from the Department of Veterans Affairs had been sent to help residents of veterans homes in multiple states, including Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

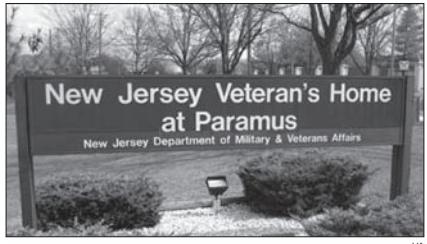
That's just a snapshot of the coronavirus clusters in long-term

care homes nationwide. The New York Times reported Tuesday that about 3,800 residents and employees at U.S. nursing homes had died — a likely undercount, the report said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued specific guidance for nursing homes. It advised restricting all visitors, canceling group activities and communal dining, and actively screening residents and employees for signs of the virus.

While state veterans homes are always prepared and stocked for an infectious outbreak, such as the flu, they never accounted for a pandemic of this magnitude, Bowman said.

Some veterans homes have reported shortages of personal protective equipment, he said. Through "town hall" meetings arranged by the National Association of State Veterans Homes, facility leaders have shared ideas. One home was using sanitizer made by a local distillery until they could get more through regular channels, Bowman said. Another was accepting donations



The Paramus Veterans Memorial Home in New Jersey has been among the hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic, with more than two dozen deaths.

of cloth masks made by local veterans organizations.

Bowman, the executive director of the Kentucky VA, said there were no cases of the virus in the four veterans homes he oversees. His and other veterans homes across the country — regardless of whether they have had positive cases — have prohibited visitors, canceled group activities and dining, and implemented regular temperature checks on residents and employees, he said.

Most facilities have stopped admitting new residents. The lack of new residents, combined with the cost of protective gear and overtime pay, has come at a tremendous cost, Bowman said. The association was looking to states and the federal government for support.

The payment rate from the VA increases every October to account for inflation. Early in the pandemic, the VA moved up the October increase to April, raising the payment rate by nearly 3%, Bowman said.

For fiscal 2020, nursing homes received slightly more than \$112 a day per veteran. That increased to about \$115.

While it won't mitigate the entire cost of the pandemic, Bowman said, the boost was an "immediate infusion of cash" that started going to facilities this month.

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Twitter: @nikkiwentling

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Glitches prevent aid checks from reaching millions

By HEATHER LONG
AND MICHELLE SINGLETARY

The Washington Post

Many Americans woke up Wednesday expecting to find a payment of \$1,200 or more from the U.S. government in their bank account, but instead they realized nothing had arrived yet — or the wrong amount was deposited. Parents of young children complained they did not receive the promised \$500 check for their dependent children.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin has instructed the Internal Revenue Service to get payments out as fast as possible to help offset the pain of losing jobs and shutting down businesses, but numerous glitches — affecting filers who used tax preparers, parents of dependent children and people with 2019 tax returns still to be processed — are delaying payments and causing confusion.

Several million people who filed their taxes via H&R Block, TurboTax and other popular services were unable to get their payments because the IRS did not have their direct deposit information on file, according to the Treasury, companies and experts.

The IRS launched a "Get My Payment" tool Wednesday for people to track the status of their payment and enter direct deposit information, but many who used it said they received a message saying "Payment Status Not Available," a frustration that left them without answers.

Some parents told The Washington Post that they received a \$1,200 payment for a single head of household or a \$2,400 check for a married couple but that the IRS left off the \$500-per-child-under-17 payments.

IRS and Treasury officials acknowledged they are aware of these issues and are working to fix them. A Treasury spokeswoman noted that the IRS processed nearly 80 million payments in less than three weeks. That's just over half the 150 million payments expected to go out under the Economic Impact Payment program.

Social Security recipients will automatically receive the payments later this month. Paper checks will have President Donald Trump's name on them and are expected to start going out in the coming days. Low-income Americans who do not normally file a tax return, including the homeless, are also eligible to receive the \$1,200 check, but only if they enter their information in a new non-filers tool on IRS.gov.

Below is some of the most common issues preventing people

from getting the payments and what steps the IRS recommends to rectify them.

■ Millions of H&R Block, TurboTax and Jackson Hewitt customers didn't get their payments. Customers who use popular tax preparation services such as H&R Block, TurboTax and Jackson Hewitt complained on Twitter and to The Post that they didn't get their stimulus payment on Wednesday.

Up to 21 million tax filers could be affected, said consumer law expert Vijay Raghavan, because the IRS does not have these people's direct deposit information on file if they received an advance on their tax refund from these companies or had the fee for tax preparation taken out of their tax refund.

The tax preparation companies received these people's tax refund first, deducted their fees and then distributed the remaining refund to the customers. Because of that, the IRS had a "temporary bank account" on file that the tax preparer created for the 2019 tax season, Raghavan said.

■ Payment Status Not Available

Frustrated taxpayers also took to Twitter to vent about their inability to track when and how they would be getting their money. Some posted an image of the message they received after entering their information: "Payment Status Not Available."

There are a number of reasons the tool can't check the status of a stimulus payment, the IRS said.

You aren't eligible for a payment.

Your payment is based on your status as a Social Security, disability or railroad retirement beneficiary. In this case, the IRS will use your SSA or RRB Form 1099 payment information. Your payment information isn't available on the Get My Payment website.

You have not filed a 2018 or 2019 federal tax return.

You filed your 2019 return, but it hasn't been fully processed.

You used the non-filers tool, but the information you entered is still being processed.

There's a problem verifying your identity when answering the security questions.

Information on the site is updated only once a day, so checking more than once in a 24-hour period won't yield a different result.

■ Receiving the wrong money for dependent children

A number of people indicated that they received the incorrect payment amount.



NAM Y. HUH/AP

A man looks at the closed sign in front of Illinois Department of Employment Security in Chicago, Wednesday. Illinois' unemployment safety net has been stretched to the limit because of the pandemic.

Jobless: Layoffs deepening and broadening

FROM FRONT PAGE

That would be more than double the contraction that occurred during the 2008-2009 recession, which was the worst downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

All businesses deemed non-essential have been closed in nearly every state. Deep job losses have been inflicted across nearly every industry. Some economists say the unemployment rate could reach as high as 20% in April, which would be the highest rate since the Depression. By comparison, unemployment never topped 10% during the Great Recession.

Layoffs are spreading well beyond service industries like hotels, restaurants, retail stores and entertainment, which have absorbed the brunt of the job cuts, into white collar professional occupations, including software programmers, legal assistants and sales people. Workers in other occupations, like construction, are also suffering.

Up to 50 million jobs are vulnerable to coronavirus-related layoffs, economists say — about one-third of all positions in the United States. That figure is based on a calculation of jobs that are deemed non-essential by state and federal governments and that cannot be done from home.

It's unlikely that all three workers will be laid off or file for unemployment benefits. But it suggests the extraordinary magnitude of unemployment that could result from the pandemic.

"This crisis combines the scale of a national economic downturn with the pace of a natural disaster," said Daniel Zhao, senior economist at Glassdoor. "And that's really unprecedented in American economic history."

All told, nearly 12 million people are now receiving unemployment checks, essentially matching the peak reached in January 2010, shortly after the

Great Recession officially ended.

That figure is less than the number of applicants in part because it lags behind the number of first-time jobless claims figure by a week. And many people who apply for unemployment aid are turned down and don't actually receive checks.

Many of the jobless whose applications for unemployment aid haven't been accepted are likely self-employed and gig workers. The government's \$2.2 trillion economic relief package provides jobless benefits to those groups for the first time. But most states have to set up new computer systems to process those claims — a process that could take weeks in some cases.

The rescue package also established a \$350 billion loan program to small businesses, with the loans forgiven if companies retain or rehire their workers. But Michelle Meyer, chief U.S. economist at Bank of America, said that so far there's little evidence that the program has stemmed job losses. Meyer said she thought some companies may be a better option, given that the government has added \$600 to the weekly unemployment aid that states provide. The total jobless benefit could replace all or even more than a low-income worker's normal paycheck.

On Thursday, the small-business aid program ran out of money after more than 1.6 million loans were approved, though it isn't clear that much of the money has yet been disbursed. Members of Congress are seeking a deal for additional funding.

In recent days, economic reports have contributed to a bleak economic picture. Sales at stores and restaurants fell by the most on record in March, the government said Wednesday. U.S. industrial output fell by the most since 1946. And home building plunged 22% in March from the previous

month.

Retailers and other service companies keep cutting jobs. The electronics chain Best Buy said this week that it will furlough 51,000 of its hourly employees, including nearly all its part-time workers. Royal Caribbean Cruises will cut one-quarter of its 5,000 corporate employees.

But now, job losses are not only deepening but also broadening, a trend that is sure to continue as the longer the economic downturn lasts. The software company Toast, which works with the restaurant industry, last week cut half its workforce — 1,300 people — citing a dizzying drop in restaurant sales. Yelp, the customer review site, cut 1,000 jobs. Groupon, the online discount company, said 2,800.

Employee discussions of layoffs on Zhao's website have jumped 47% among information technology firms and 64% in finance, he said. Such discussions have nearly doubled among workers in health care. That's no longer surprising: Many doctors' offices and other health providers have cut back on nonessential procedures, and some are cutting staff.

The delays in many states in processing applications for contractors and gig workers is a problem for people like Celia Rocha, 44, who lost what she called her "dream job" as a studio assistant to an artist in Los Angeles after California ordered all non-essential businesses to close last month. Rocha, who had worked as a contractor for three years, said she applied for benefits but was inexplicably turned down. When she has called the state's phone line to ask questions, she has received only a recording directing her to the website.

"It's really frustrating that you can't talk to someone and have your questions answered," Rocha said. "There's no information about when we can apply for this on the state's website."

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Economic fallout from pandemic worsens

Associated Press

PARIS — Economic pain from the coronavirus pandemic deepened Thursday, as health authorities warned that returning to normal is a distant goal despite many leaders' hopes of reopening stores, factories, airplanes and schools quickly and safely.

Fallout from the virus spread in ways both predictable and devastating, from police torching an illicit food market in Zimbabwe, to emergency flights carrying foreign farm workers to Britain and Germany, to protests at U.S. state capitols against millions of job losses.

The U.S. government reported Thursday that 5.2 million more people applied for unemployment benefits last week, bringing the running total to about 22 million out of a U.S. work force of roughly 159 million — easily the worst stretch of U.S. job losses on record.

In France, Amazon suspended operations after a court ruled it wasn't doing enough to protect its workers in the country. The online retailer, which has six warehouses in France, said it would evaluate the court decision.

In Britain, a government survey found that a quarter of companies have suspended business. Cargo traffic at Europe's massive port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands sank 9.3% in the first quarter from the same period a year ago and its CEO warned of worse to come.

The World Health Organization's European chief said optimism that the spread of the virus was declining in Italy, Spain and France was tempered by the knowledge that it was rising or sustained at a high level in Britain, Russia and Turkey.

"The storm clouds of this pandemic still hang heavily over the European region," Dr. Hans Kluge said.

The International Monetary Fund says fallout from what it calls the "Great Lockdown" will be the most devastating since the Great Depression in the 1930s.

That has made leaders all the more anxious to send people back to work and school and to rebuild economies devastated by the pandemic that has infected more than 2 million people and claimed more than 137,000 lives, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

Italy's hardest-hit region of Lombardy is pushing to relaunch manufacturing on May 4, the day that the national lockdown is set to lift. Regional officials are considering ordering companies to stagger opening hours to avoid cramming public transport.

But Italy's deputy economic development minister, Stefano Buffagni, called the plan premature.

"Going in a random order risks fueling



MARTIN MEISSNER/AP

Fan portraits are set on the supporters tribune of German Bundesliga soccer club Borussia Mönchengladbach at the stadium in Mönchengladbach, Germany, on Thursday. The Bundesliga suspended all matches until April 30.

confusion among citizens and businesses," Buffagni said.

In China, where the virus first emerged in December, even people who still have jobs have been wary of spending much or going out. Some Chinese cities tried reassuring consumers by showing officials eating in restaurants.

The U.S. began issuing one-time payments this week to tens of millions of people as part of its \$2.2 trillion coronavirus relief package.

The U.S. has seen nearly 640,000 infections — more than the next four countries put together — and leads the world with nearly 31,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University. Experts say, however, the true toll of the pandemic is much higher due to limited testing, uneven counting of deaths and some governments' attempts to downplay their outbreaks.

In Brussels, the pandemic was making the European Union redraw all of its budget plans to focus on tackling the coronavirus pandemic. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the

27-nation bloc's next trillion-euro budget will have to be re-imagined as "the mother-of-our-recovery."

Troubling data indicate the worst may still be to come in many parts of the world.

Japan's prime minister announced he would expand a state of emergency to the entire country, rather than just urban areas, as the virus continued to spread.

Britain, with over 13,700 dead, extended its nationwide lockdown on schools, pubs, restaurants and most stores for at least three more weeks as health officials said the outbreak was nearing its peak, and the move appeared to have wide public support. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said, "Any change to our social distancing measures now would risk a significant increase in the spread of the virus."

Swiss authorities announced a staggered series of reopenings, starting April 27 with medical and dental offices, hair salons and other select businesses, followed in May and June by other stores, schools, zoos, libraries and museums.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres urged stepped-up efforts to prepare Africa for the virus, warning that the continent "could end up suffering the greatest impacts."

In Zimbabwe, where food was scarce even before the pandemic, police raided a market, torching 3 tons of fresh fruit and vegetables and scattering farmers who had broken travel restrictions to try to sell their wares.

Singapore scrambled to react after seeing more than 1,100 cases since Monday. It had successfully contained a first wave of infections, but new cases are occurring among workers from poorer Asian countries who live in crowded dormitories in the tiny city-state.

In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro's lackadaisical approach to the virus came under increased pressure for the dangers it placed Brazilians in. "We're fighting against the coronavirus and against the 'Bolsonaro-virus,'" Sao Paulo state Gov. Joao Doria told the AP, adding that he believes the president has adopted "incorrect, irresponsible positions."

Some smaller stores in Germany to reopen amid 'fragile' success

By MARCUS KLOECKNER
Stars and Stripes

KAIERSLAUTERN, Germany — Smaller stores can reopen soon and masks are now recommended while shopping as Germany tries to maintain its "fragile" success in containing the coronavirus, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said.

Stores up to 800 square meters, or about 8,600 square feet, will be allowed to do business starting Monday if they can maintain hygiene precautions, Merkel said in a televised address Wednesday night. Bookstores, bicycle shops and auto dealers may also open again, regardless of size. Bars, restaurants and cafes may continue to offer takeout or delivery only.

A ban on gatherings of more than two people in public who are not part of the same household, and a social distancing policy of at least 1.5 meters, or about 5 feet, will remain in place, Merkel said.

The U.S. military in Germany's policies are slightly more stringent than the national standard. The military calls for at least 6 feet of social distance, in line with U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. The military also requires personnel to wear masks in public when 6 feet of social distance can't be maintained.

Merkel on Wednesday said masks are recommended in stores and on public transportation, though cities and states can declare additional measures.

Hanau, a city of about 100,000 near

Frankfurt, will require anyone in a store to wear a mask beginning Monday, Germany's Focus Online reported.

The health care system has kept up with the pace of coronavirus infection, "something that was not at all certain from the beginning," said Merkel, who called the country's containment efforts a "fragile and intermediate success."

"We do not have much leeway," she said.

Schools, which have been closed for about a month, will reopen in phases starting May 4, with students about to graduate high school returning first. Elementary schools, kindergartens and preschools will remain closed, Merkel said.

Barber shops and salons should expect to be able to reopen beginning May 4, she

said.

The latest measures will take effect Monday through May 3, and will be reviewed April 30.

Borders with neighboring countries also will remain closed, officials said.

Germany had about 130,000 confirmed coronavirus cases and 3,569 deaths as of Thursday, the country's Robert Koch Institute reported. The coronavirus-related death toll is substantially lower than in neighboring France, which had more than 17,000 deaths, and nearby Italy, which has suffered more than 21,000 deaths, the World Health Organization reported Thursday.

kloeckner.marcus@stripes.com

VIRUS OUTBREAK ROUNDUP

Thousands protest restrictions

Associated Press

LANSING — Thousands of flag-waving, honking protesters drove past the Michigan Capitol on Wednesday to show their displeasure with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's orders to keep people at home and businesses locked during the coronavirus outbreak.

As snow fell, others got out of their vehicles and raised signs, one of which read, "Gov. Whitmer We Are Not Prisoners." Another said, "Michiganander Against Gretchens Abuses."

Hours later, Whitmer shot back, telling reporters that the rally put health at risk.

Whitmer, a Democrat, extended a stay-home order through April 30 and has shut down schools and businesses deemed non-essential. The governor acknowledged the pain but said that the restrictions were necessary to stop the spread of the coronavirus, which has killed more than 1,900 Michigan residents and overwhelmed hospitals in the Detroit area.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Public health officials in Arizona's largest county said that they're seeing improvements in the number of people hospitalized for the coronavirus.

The Maricopa County Department of Public Health said Wednesday that the rate of growth in hospitalizations is slowing. Officials said that's likely due to the social distancing measures which have closed businesses and left people avoiding large gatherings.

The county also released data showing that people with high blood pressure, diabetes or heart, kidney, lung or liver disease are more likely to be hospitalized. People with high blood pressure, for example, make up 35% of hospitalizations but only 17% of the total group of people with cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

Meanwhile, state health officials said that 11 more people in Arizona have died from complications of the coronavirus, bringing the total number of deaths since the start of the outbreak to 142. The 11 deaths reported Wednesday were in Maricopa, Pima, Coconino and Navajo counties.

California

SACRAMENTO — California will be the first state to give cash to immigrants living in the country illegally who are hurt by the coronavirus, offering \$500 apiece to 150,000 adults who were left out of the \$2.2 trillion stimulus package approved by Congress.

People living in the country illegally are not eligible for any of that money, and advocates have been pushing for states to fill in the gap. On Wednesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that he would spend \$75 million of taxpayer money to create a Disaster Relief Fund for immigrants living in the country illegally.

Senate Republican Leader Shannon Grove said that Newsom should spend the money instead on food banks, equipment for students to continue their education online and local governments struggling with revenue losses.

California has an estimated 2.2 million



PAUL SANCYA/AP

Steve Polet holds a sign during a protest at the State Capitol in Lansing, Mich., on Wednesday.

immigrants living in the country illegally, the most of any state, according to the Pew Research Center.

State officials won't decide who gets the money. Instead, the state will give the money to a network of regional nonprofits to find and vet potential recipients.

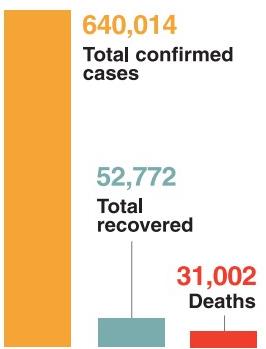
Hawaii

HONOLULU — Hawaii state worker unions on Wednesday pushed back at what they said was a proposal from Gov. David Ige to cut employee pay by 20% to cope with a sharp drop in tax revenue brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

Ige said at a news conference that he was in discussions with unions and lawmakers about potential cuts, but no decision has been made. He said that the tax shortfalls meant the state needed to cut \$1.5 billion from the state budget over the next 15 months.

U.S. cases, recoveries, deaths

As of noon April 16



He noted that the state has essentially shut down the tourism industry to slow the spread of the virus, which has hammered two major sources of state income: the hotel tax and the general excise tax.

He said that tax increases weren't under consideration "at this point in time." The governor said that he and members of his cabinet would take a similar pay cut to any taken by employees.

Mississippi

JACKSON — Facing two freedom-of-religion lawsuits and pushback from the U.S. attorney general, a Mississippi mayor said Wednesday that people may attend drive-in church services during the coronavirus pandemic, but they must keep their windows up.

Greenville Mayor Errick D. Simmons also said that local churches may allow up to 10 people at a time in a building for worship services that are shown online or carried on TV or radio, as long as those inside the church follow public health guidelines to maintain a safe distance from one another.

A conservative legal group called Alliance Defending Freedom filed a federal lawsuit Friday challenging the Greenville order as unconstitutional. On Tuesday, U.S. Attorney General William Barr took the rare step of filing papers to side with those suing the city. Gov. Tate Reeves tweeted thanks to Barr "for this strong stand in support of religious liberty."

North Carolina

RALEIGH — The North Carolina Department of Revenue granted permission to over 3,400 business to be recognized as essential entities, and denied more than 500 other companies who filed a similar appeal during the coronavirus outbreak.

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper's stay-at-home order on March 27 had set a broad definition of essential businesses, and the ones that were granted appeal Wednesday were mostly listed in the original executive order, WRAL-TV reported. The permission granted by the state's revenue department was a confirmation for most businesses, including landscapers, dog groomers, carpet cleaners and many more.

Others were not so lucky. Barber shops, salons and a bounce house party rental

company make up part of the 50 businesses that were fully denied their appeal. Debi Creech, who owns a fitness company called "Zumba with Debi," has started hosting online classes to keep her business afloat under the closure.

The state also denied appeal to 533 other businesses, including a gun range and a vape shop, unless they put in place more social distancing efforts. Some of these businesses have since partially opened.

North Dakota

BISMARCK — Bismarck city commissioners have rejected a request by local restaurant owners to temporarily allow the businesses to sell alcohol with takeout orders.

Several North Dakota cities have made such adjustments to help restaurants deal with a reduction in business because of the coronavirus stay-at-home order.

Mandan is one city allowing restaurants to sell sealed cans or bottles of alcohol with takeout meals.

The Bismarck Tribune reported that Mayor Stew Bakken said restaurants have typically told the city that alcohol is an add-on and that food is their primary source of revenue.

New York

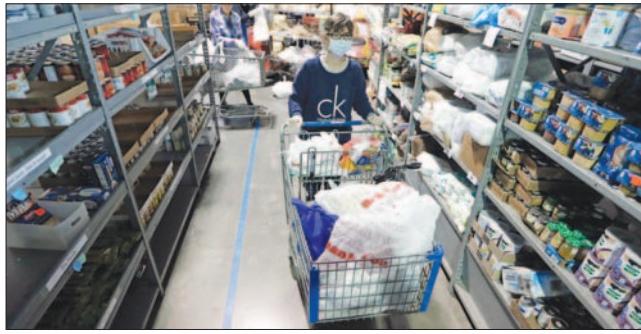
New York residents will be required to wear face coverings anytime they come into close contact with other people outside their homes, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Wednesday.

The mandate will require a mask or face covering, like a bandana, on busy streets, public transit or any situation where people cannot maintain 6 feet of social distancing, even if it is passing a person briefly on a wooded trail. The order takes effect Friday.

The governor, who has himself eschewed masks during his daily news briefings, though he comes within six feet of his staff, said that there will initially be no civil penalties for noncompliance, but he's urging merchants to enforce it among customers.

Though hospitalizations from the outbreak have leveled off, New York officials are still trying to reduce the rising death toll. New York recorded 752 deaths Tuesday for a total of nearly 11,600 since the outbreak began.

VIRUS OUTBREAK



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Worker Laura Burbank pushes a cart filled with food for a family through the pantry at GraceWorks Ministries food pantry in Franklin, Tenn.

Pandemic provokes spike in demand for US food pantries

BY TERESA M. WALKER
AND ELANA SCHOR
Associated Press

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — Brooklyn Dotson needed food. Her first unemployment check had yet to arrive after she was let go by the warehouse where she used to work.

So the 25-year-old Nashville woman scrounged up some gas money and drove 30 miles to the GraceWorks Ministries food pantry in Franklin. There, at the pantry's new drive-thru, workers wearing masks and gloves loaded her van with about \$350 worth of groceries.

"I don't have any income coming in, I don't get any food stamps, so it's just hard to get any help right now," Dotson said, while waiting in line at GraceWorks.

Food pantries stay busy even in the best of economic times; the coronavirus pandemic has prompted a spike in demand as millions of people like Dotson find themselves furloughed, laid off or with businesses that have suffered huge financial blows.

"About 50% of the people coming through our lines have never been here before," said GraceWorks president and CEO Valentina A. Breckinridge.

Just as demand is skyrocketing, however, many of the food banks' sources are drying up. Restaurants, hotels and resorts — many of which are shuttered or sharply limiting their operations — are no longer supplying them with food, while other suppliers are busy restocking grocery shelves. Farmers have switched from shipping vegetables and meats in bulk to individual packaging for grocery stores.

"It is a perfect storm scenario," said Katie Fitzgerald, chief operating officer for Feeding America, a nationwide association of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries.

Feeding America has seen an increase in demand from 95% of its member banks, according

to a recent survey. The average increase for a member was 63%, while 95% of the association's food banks reported an increase in operating expenses, the organization said.

Congress included a significant boost for emergency food assistance in its coronavirus relief legislation, but Fitzgerald warned that funding may take months to reach localities, while food banks contend with a flood of need in the near term. The \$100 million that billionaire Jeff Bezos pledged to the association on April 2 was already being deployed last week, she said.

"When people say what do you need the most, we need food and money," said Nancy Kiel, president and CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee.

In addition to finding ways to meet the spike in demand, food banks have had to devise creative new ways to distribute ever greater amounts of food while keeping both recipients and their staff safe from exposure to the coronavirus.

The San Francisco-Marin Food Bank in California has built "pop-up" pantries after some of its previous 275 or so sites had to stop operating during the pandemic, spokeswoman Keely Hopkins said. The new sites, many of which are serving hundreds of people per day, stay open for longer hours and use open spaces such as parking lots to facilitate social distancing, she added.

Paid staffers are diving in at many food banks to stock, sort and bag food for either delivery or drive-thru pickups, a measure that they realized was necessary to protect volunteers, many of whom are older and particularly at risk for complications from the virus. Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee limits volunteers to 10 per room to fill boxes.

The board of the East Nashville Cooperative Ministry has proposed closing because so many of its volunteers are elderly, including Judy Wahstrom, who runs

the program.

Wahlstrom, 70, has refused, but she said that she is taking precautions, allowing only one person inside at a time to select food off the shelves while she wears a mask and gloves.

"I said, 'If I get it, I get it,'" Wahlstrom said. "I don't have anybody at home dependent on me. I said, 'I got to keep it open.' And I gave the volunteers all the options."

At the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, spokeswoman Cathy Nesten said that nearly 45,000 volunteers helped out last year. This year, in order to adopt the best practices for social distancing to combat the virus, staffers have stepped up their help.

Nesten said that the bank, which acts as a food distribution center for hundreds of member agencies, moved to a six-day work week this month and would consider moving to seven days a week if demand called for it.

Oklahoma had ranked among the hungriest states in the nation before the coronavirus, Nesten noted.

"This pandemic on top of it just shines a light on how so many households, not just in Oklahoma but around the country, live paycheck to paycheck," she said. "When a household becomes economically insecure, they almost immediately become food-insecure."

Food banks like Nesten's are realizing that the sharp increase in demand could continue for months, which she said makes donations even more crucial.

For now, one thing is certain: Whatever food they do acquire is flying off the shelves just as fast as it arrives.

"The food's coming in the back door, and it's going right out the front to the customers," said Courtney Vrabilik, executive director of The Store, a supermarket founded by singer Brad Paisley and his wife last month in Nashville to provide free food for those in need.

New pressure on lawmakers as aid for firms hits limit

BY ANDREW TAYLOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With a key coronavirus rescue fund now exhausted, negotiations are accelerating in Washington over President Donald Trump's \$250 billion emergency request to help smaller employers across the country keep workers on the payroll.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin are in talks about legislation to shore up a paycheck subsidy program. The Small Business Administration announced Thursday that it has reached its \$349 billion lending limit and is no longer accepting applications.

House and Senate Democratic aides expect to launch another round of talks Thursday by phone with Treasury officials about Democratic demands for additional money for hospitals and state and local governments.

The outlook for the legislation is unclear, and negotiators may not be able to meet a potential deadline of a vote during Thursday afternoon's pro forma session.

The Capitol is largely shuttered, requiring consensus from all sides for any legislation to pass, and top GOP leaders are vowing to stick closely to Trump's request despite Democrats' additional demands. Long-standing feuds and rivalries hang over the talks, including a toxic relationship between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Trump.

But the unprecedented legislative environment gives Democrats considerable influence, even if their funding requests for hospitals and state and local governments may have to be scaled back significantly or dropped, at least for now. Democrats blocked a fast-track bid to pass the funding last week, and Republicans in turn stymied their efforts for additional funding for other priorities in a brief debate that was mostly a messaging exercise.

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell issued a joint statement with top House Republican Kevin McCarthy of California urging quick funding for the payroll protection program. The Senate is away from Washington through May 4, though it convenes twice each week for pro forma sessions that could be used to pass more coronavirus aid — though only if no senator objects.

Republicans amped up the pressure for a "clean" extension of the paycheck program in statements Wednesday night. House GOP Whip Steve Scalise said that Democrats "need to stop holding small businesses and workers across America hostage to their endless spending demands."

McCarthy joined in tweeting: "Tell Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi to STOP blocking critical funding for small businesses. The Paycheck Protection Program is about to run out of money — millions of jobs are hanging in the balance. Congress MUST ACT!"

With leaders unable to readily summon lawmakers to Washington, the usual power dynamics are scrambled, especially in the House. There, Minority Leader McCarthy, for example, can mystify legislation more easily than if members are present, and Pelosi, D-Calif., cannot rule the House with her typical tight grip.

At issue is a \$350 billion paycheck protection program that's a centerpiece of last month's \$2.2 trillion rescue bill. The program gives grants to businesses with fewer than 500 workers so that they can maintain payroll and pay rent while shutting down their businesses during social distancing edicts.

The program has been getting swamped by businesses applying for loans and has reached its appropriations limit. Mnuchin said that an additional \$250 billion is needed immediately.

But Democrats want money for hospitals burdened under COVID-19 caseloads and additional funding for states and local governments straining as the economy slides into recession.

They also want to make sure that the paycheck protection program is opened up more to businesses that don't have established relationships with banks that have been accepting applications for rescue funding.

"We cannot allow the billions, hundreds of billions of dollars being spent to fight the horror of the coronavirus and the impact on our economy to further widen the disparity of the lack of access to credit for so many in the small-business community," Pelosi said Wednesday on CNN. She also reiterated demands for "desperate state and local governments" and hospitals.

Pelosi is pressing to add mREB publicans are increasingly agitating to help rural hospitals, while Democrats are also keen to boost aid to cash-strapped states and local governments whose revenues have cratered. Aiding the states may be a stretch for now, however, as the issue can easily provoke fights between large, high-tax states like California and New York and smaller states more typically run by Republicans.

Senate Democrats are already eyeing the next coronavirus bill, proposing that it include \$30 billion for a comprehensive federal plan to ramp up testing and its supply chain for diagnostic materials, as well as the ability to trace the spread of COVID-19.

NATION



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

Wreckage smolders at the Androscoggin Mill after an explosion Wednesday in Jay, Maine.

No injuries in paper mill blast

Associated Press

PORLAND, Maine — An explosion at a paper mill in Maine shook the ground Wednesday and produced a plume of black smoke that was visible for miles around, but it appeared no one was injured.

The blast rocked the Androscoggin Mill in Jay, in central Maine, around noon, state police spokesman Steve McCausland said. Mill personnel told police no one was injured, though some people suffered respiratory distress.

A rising cloud of smoke that was recorded by a bystander was followed by raining debris that made bullet-like noise as it struck cars in the area. Video recorded

after the explosion showed extensive damage to the mill, which employs about 500 people and is a key piece of rural Maine's economy.

Emergency responders rushed to the mill, and the state fire marshal planned an investigation. The cause wasn't clear to investigators, and the investigation will likely begin in earnest on Thursday, as the scene was still being secured, police said.

The explosion left significant damage in the area of the mill's digester, which is used to process raw materials. Mill spokesperson Roxie Lassetter said the company was in the preliminary stages of assessing what happened and evaluating the environmental

impact.

The explosion released a mixture of wood fiber, water and chemicals, and the company is taking steps to restore order to the mill site, Lassetter said. The most important thing is no one was hurt, Lassetter said.

"It's nothing short of a miracle, and we are grateful," Lassetter said.

Gov. Janet Mills urged residents to stay far from the Jay scene. She also said during a news conference that the state is "breathing a deep sigh of relief" that the explosion wasn't a bigger disaster.

"I just want to say, if ever there was a day when we should believe in miracles, today is it," she said.

Progressives weigh backing Biden to avoid second Trump win

BY SARA BURNETT
AND WILL WEISSERT
Associated Press

CHICAGO — When Bernie Sanders didn't win the Democratic presidential nomination in 2016, Silvia Machado and Patrick Gibbons voted for Green Party candidate Jill Stein in protest.

Four years later, the couple is still passionate about the Vermont senator's progressive agenda. But they're open to voting for the relatively centrist Joe Biden if that's what it takes to defeat President Donald Trump.

"It's like hold your nose and vote," said Gibbons, 59.

A week after Sanders' exit left Biden as the presumptive Democratic nominee, the former vice president is working to win over voters such as Machado and Gibbons. The party is desperate to avoid a repeat of 2016 when ideological divides helped Trump win the White House.

Biden has made a series of pro-

posals intended to appeal to progressives and won endorsements this week from Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, another liberal rival during the Democratic primary.

But the tensions that have weighed on Democrats for years aren't suddenly evaporating. While some voters are making a practical calculation to beat Trump by supporting Biden, other leaders of the movement are urging caution until Biden embraces priorities such as the universal health care plan known as "Medicare for All."

"The Biden that exists now will not get a lot of votes from progressives currently inclined to not vote at all or to vote third party," said Norman Solomon, co-founder of the activist organization Roots Action. "The only tool now to defeat Trump is Joe Biden, and the only way to sharpen that tool is to move him in a more progressive direction."

AP VoteCast surveys of the

electorate conducted before Sanders dropped out of the race show skepticism among his supporters about Biden. Across 17 states where the survey was conducted, 54% of Sanders backers said they would be dissatisfied if Biden were the nominee. Just 28% of all Democratic primary voters said the same.

In the three states that voted on March 17 — Florida, Arizona and Illinois — some Sanders supporters went further, vowing not to support Biden. Thirteen percent said they would definitely not vote for Biden, and an additional 10% said they probably would not.

A slim majority, 54%, indicated that they definitely would support the Democrat against Trump, while 23% said they probably would.

In Arizona, a state that Democrats are hoping to flip in November, 8% of Democratic primary voters overall said they would not vote for Biden in November. But among Sanders supporters, that

Trump threatens to bypass rules to get nominees

BY KEVIN FREKING
AND LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Citing the coronavirus, Donald Trump is threatening unprecedented action — adjourning both houses of Congress — to entice the Senate to approve more of his nominees.

In recent years, Congress has refused to fully adjourn during most breaks precisely to prevent the president from making recess appointments. Little or no business is conducted in such "pro forma sessions," but they give members of both chambers of Congress the chance to go back home without going into recess.

It's a process lawmakers also employed to thwart President Barack Obama's nominees.

Trump says he's had enough and warns that he will seek to adjourn both chambers of Congress if lawmakers don't formally declare a proper recess. That way, he could appoint some nominees without the Senate's approval. Trump said, "Perhaps it's never been done before, nobody's even sure if it has, but we're going to do it."

The Constitution does not spell out a unilateral power for the president to adjourn Congress. It states only that he can decide on adjournment if there is a dispute over it between the House

and Senate. Such a disagreement does not now exist, nor is it likely to arise.

Constitutional scholar Jonathan Turley said on Twitter the Constitution gives a president authority in "extraordinary occasions" to convene or adjourn Congress. However, he said, "This power has never been used and should not be used now."

It would be an extraordinary showdown between the two branches of government that have engaged in repeated tests of constitutional powers in the Trump era.

"The current practice of leaving town while conducting phony pro-forma sessions is a dereliction of duty that the American people cannot afford during this crisis," Trump said Wednesday at the White House.

Doug Andres, a spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, said the senator talked with Trump and shared his frustration about the process, but Andres also indicated the current rules regarding adjournments will remain. He said McConnell "pledged to find ways to confirm nominees considered mission-critical to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Under Senate rules, Andres said, that will require consent from Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

my supporters but to do everything I can to bring the party together to see that (Trump) is not elected president," Sanders said.

The future of the progressive movement may rest with leaders such as Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The New York Democrat has long said she would back the ultimate Democratic nominee.

She told Politico on Wednesday that she supports Biden "in solidarity with the families I represent."

Prospects for reconciliation between Biden and progressives may not all be bleak, however, especially with the election still more than six months away.

Jorge Trejo-Ibarra, a Las Vegas high school senior who will turn 18 in July, said he flirted with the idea of not backing Biden. But with the economy largely shuttered amid the coronavirus outbreak, he said he doesn't think the U.S. can survive another four years of Trump.

WEEKEND



Doom Eternal raises
difficulty level
Video games, Page 20

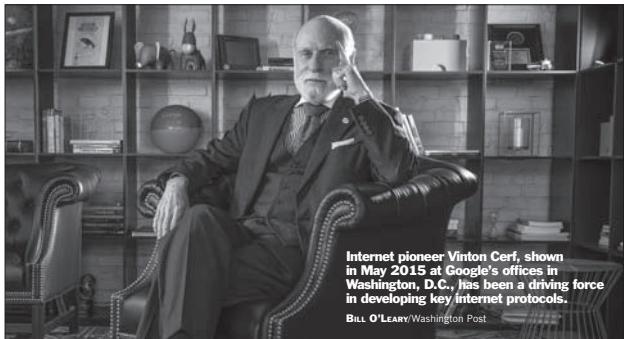


New life

Period of heartbreak, change culminates in bass virtuoso Thundercat's brilliant fourth studio album, 'It Is What It Is'

Music, Page 30

WEEKEND: GADGETS & TECHNOLOGY



Internet pioneer Vinton Cerf, shown in May 2015 at Google's offices in Washington, D.C., has been a driving force in developing key internet protocols.

BILL O'LEARY/Washington Post

Built to withstand anything

The internet is working the way Cold War-era designers intended

BY CRAIG TIMBERG

The Washington Post

Coronavirus knocked down — at least for a time — internet pioneer Vinton Cerf, who offers this reflection on the experience: “I don’t recommend it ... It’s very debilitating.”

But Cerf, 76 and now recovering in his northern Virginia home, has better news to report about the computer network he and others spent much of their lives creating. Despite some problems, the internet overall is handling unprecedented surges of demand as it helps keep a fractured world connected at a time of global catastrophe.

“This basic architecture is 50 years old, and everyone is online,” Cerf noted in a video interview over Google Hangouts, with a mix of triumph and wonder in his voice. “And the thing is not collapsing.”

The internet, born as a Pentagon project during some of the chillier years of the Cold War, has taken such a central role in 21st century civilian society, culture and business that few pause any longer to appreciate its wonders — except perhaps, in the past few weeks, when it becomes even more central to our lives.

Many facets of human life — work, school, banking, shopping, flirting, live music, government services, chats with friends, calls to aging parents — have moved online in this era of social distancing, all without breaking the network. It has groaned here and there, as anyone who has struggled through a glitchy video conference knows, but it hasn’t failed.

“Resiliency and redundancy are very much a part of the internet design,” explained Cerf.

Comcast, the nation’s largest source of residential internet, serving more than 26 million homes, reports that peak traffic was up by nearly one third in March, with some areas reaching as high as 60% above normal. Demand for online voice, video and VPN connections — all staples of remote work — have surged, and peak usage hours have shifted from evenings, when people typically stream video for entertainment, to daytime work hours.

But so far, internet industry officials report that they’ve been able to manage the shifting loads and surges. To a substantial extent, the network has managed them automatically because its underlying protocols adapt to shifting conditions, working around trouble spots to find more efficient routes for data transmissions and managing glitches in a way that doesn’t break connections entirely.

Some credit goes to Comcast, Google and the other giant, well-resourced corporations essential to the internet’s operation today. But perhaps even more goes to the seminal engineers and scientists like Cerf, who for decades worked to create a particular kind of global network: open, efficient, resilient and highly interoperable so anyone could join and nobody needed to be in charge.

“They’re deservedly taking a bit of a moment for a high five right now,” said Jason Livingood, a Comcast vice president who has briefed some members of the internet’s founding generation about how the company has been handling increased demands.

Cerf was a driving force in developing key internet protocols in the 1970s, while working for Stanford University and, later, the Pentagon’s Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which provided key early research funding but ultimately relinquished control of the network it spawned.

“You’re seeing a success story right now,” said David Clark, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology computer scientist who worked on early internet protocols, speaking by the videoconferencing service Zoom. “If we didn’t have the internet, we’d be in an incredibly different place right now. What if this had happened in the 1980s?”

Such a system carries a notable cost in terms of security and privacy, a fact the world rediscovers every time there’s a major data breach, ransomware attack or controversy over the amount of information governments and private companies collect about anyone who’s online — a category that includes more than half of the world’s almost 8 billion people.

Some of the early internet architects — Cerf among them, from his position at the Pentagon — were determined to design a system that could continue operating through almost anything, including a nuclear attack from the Soviets.

That’s one reason the system doesn’t have any preferred path from Point A to Point B. It continuously calculates and recalculates the best route, and if something in the middle fails, the computers that calculate transmission paths find new routes — without having to ask anyone’s permission to do so.

Steve Crocker, a networking pioneer like Cerf, compared this quality to that of a sponge, an organism whose functions are so widely distributed that breaking one part does not typically cause the entire organism to die.

“You can do damage to a portion of it, and the rest of it just lumber forward,” Crocker said, also speaking by Zoom.

ON THE COVER: Thundercat recently released his fourth studio album, “It Is What It Is.”

Eddie Alcazar

GADGET WATCH

Speaker has vintage look, modern sound and ports

BY GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

With an attractive vintage look, Electrohome Birmingham’s retro Bluetooth speaker seeks to bring back the era of mop tops and mullets from the golden age of rock ‘n’ roll. I prefer to say it reminds me of a hi-fi stereo system my dad had long ago.

While the look takes you back in time, the sound and features are up to date and forward marching. It produces room-filling sound from any play list or can stream any music service with a Bluetooth connection from your smartphone, tablet or computer.

The exterior is hand-crafted from engineered MDF wood with a carrying handle built into the top. Producing the sound inside are dual full-range 4-inch woofers with an integrated amplifier.

To add to the vintage look, controls for adjusting the music, power and volume are all knobs along the top of the front side of the speaker. There’s also a 3.5 mm aux input for a direct connection and USB charging port to connect your cable for device charging.

Working as a Bluetooth speaker is the primary function of the Birmingham, but there’s an appealing feature for guitar players who want to jam along. Since I have zero musical talents, I couldn’t try it, but if you’re a guitar player, you can plug into the built-in input and customize the live sound with the volume and gain control.

Online: electrohome.com; \$149

Rather than having to remember a combination or have a key to open it, the Tapplock Lite uses your fingerprint.

The smart finger-print portable padlock opens in less than 1 second after being programmed with your fingerprint. You can store up to 100 fingerprints for each lock, which are managed in the Tapplock app.



TWELVE SOUTH/TNS
AirBag for AirPods
and AirPods Pro



Electrohome Birmingham’s retro Bluetooth speaker is hand-crafted from engineered MDF wood with a carrying handle built into the top.

In addition to the fingerprints, you can use the Tapplock app to open the lock with Bluetooth or with a combination used via Morse code.

Through the app, you can remotely manage the Bluetooth access on any other stored fingerprints. Specific dates and times can be set, and access can be revoked.

The Tapplock Lite is built with a metal chassis and an IP67 rating, making it perfect for the outdoors since it can withstand being fully submerged in water or even sweaty wet fingers.

Inside is a rechargeable battery, good for 8 months or 1,200 unlocks. The app shows the battery level and when it needs a charge. A blinking light turns off on the lock when the level is below 10 percent. One feature allows it to unlock with just an 8-second charge with a portable battery, in the event the lock’s battery goes totally dead.

Online: tapplock.com; \$39 each, 2-pack for \$72 and a 3-pack is \$105

Twelve South’s limited edition AirBag for AirPods and AirPods Pro will store, carry and protect the expensive earbuds in a unique style.

The mini satchel bag can be worn over your shoulder, around your neck or just take the leather strap off to carry it with the leather top handle or just carry it in a purse, pocket or backpack.

Your AirPods will stay in the AirBag securely when closing the front-sided metal snap button, which also allows wireless charging for the AirPods Pro. There’s also an opening for a Lightning cable for charging.

The limited edition AirBag is made with full-grain leather and protects all sides of the AirPod case.

Online: twelvesouth.com; \$49.99

WEEKEND: MOVIES



By ALYSSA ROSENBERG

The Washington Post

The superhero movie formula is simple. Hero appears to be riding high, hero is temporarily humbled by supervillain, hero regains the advantage and saves the day. Now, the real world has delivered a twist: The coronavirus pandemic makes these costumed heroes seem powerless.

COVID-19 has forced studios to postpone the release of some of their most lucrative movies and halt production on future installments of these ongoing series. Yet the threat the virus poses to superheroes isn't limited to the immediate toll on the box office. When theaters reopen, will the fantasy that a few spandex do-gooders can save us from disaster seem like a salve, or a sick joke?

This is a key question for Hollywood — or at least for its current business model — and it explains the industry's reluctance to delay its slate of planned superhero movies even as China's movie theaters went dark and it became clear the rest of the world would follow.

Given how profitable the superhero genre has proved to be, and the extent to which the profits from these movies underwrite the production of other, smaller movies, companies such as Disney were understandably reluctant to acknowledge the looming catastrophe. Delaying a movie, or shutting down a production that, may employ hundreds of people, is no small financial sacrifice. Still, as the realities of the coronavirus' spread and lethality became clear, and as movie theaters shut their doors in the name of public health, the studios retreated.

One question for Hollywood is how soon theaters can reopen; a related issue is whether audiences will have the confidence to sit in close proximity to strangers for an extended period of time. But there is a deeper question, too: After the recovery, will superheroes, Hollywood's most reliable breadwinners, still appeal to the moviegoers who once loved them?

Superheroes reliably come out on top in the movies in part because they tend to face off with the same kind of opponents over and over: brilliant individuals with diabolical plans who find a way to get a temporary drop on our costumed avengers before going down to ignominious defeat. Sure, some of those supervillains are bigger or badder than the norm — think Thanos' desire to eliminate half of all life in the universe. But at a certain point, if the Avengers or the Justice League didn't figure out how to beat the Red Skull or Lex Luthor, they'd hardly be worthy of their cowls and titles.

Viruses are very different from supervillains. They lack the ideological motivations that drive antagonists like General Zod, who squares off with Superman over their differences about how to treat humanity, or the charm

of Marvel's anti-heroic trickster, Loki. Pathogens have slightly more in common with the cannon fodder in the armies that constantly seem to be invading Earth in superhero movies, in that they are relentless, numerous and basically anonymous.

But even then, viruses can't be Hulk-smashed into submission. They're a different kind of enemy, more threatening and frightening than any of the fictional PG-13 threats superhero movies have offered us in recent years. And the skills and values necessary to defeat them, including scientific expertise, widespread community sacrifice and patience, aren't the stuff of frenetic CGI spectacles.

There are pandemic stories in superhero comics that could be adapted for the screen, but even those parallels aren't exact. These diseases are the creation of terrorists, or are personified by characters like Host, a mutant who can communicate with pathogens, all of whom can be defeated with conventional superheroic methods. Even stories that end with genius superheroes finding cures might leave audiences feeling bitter: The idea of a scientist like the Beast fast-tracking vaccine development is less a comforting fantasy than a reminder of a terrifying reality.

Maybe superhero movies will retain a kind of nostalgic pleasure as a reminder of a time when our greatest enemies were a small number of imaginary individuals with murderous agendas who could be defeated with a combination of detective work and force. But I suspect they'll remind us of an innocence that is simply too much to bear.

In "Watchmen," Alan Moore's revisionist superhero comic, the disillusioned crimefighter Rorschach fantasizes about a day when ordinary people will ask him for the help they have refused, and he'll be able to punish them by rejecting them in turn. Faced with a pandemic, it's not so much that superheroes will look down on us and whisper "No." It's that, sadly, they never had the power to save us in the first place.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Sharing the journey

Alan Yang's 'Tigertail' is loosely based on his Taiwanese father's immigration story

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Four years ago, when "Master of None" co-creator Alan Yang started writing a film loosely based on his Taiwanese father, Hollywood wasn't exactly clamoring for Asian American stories. "Crazy Rich Asians" had not made more than \$200 million. "The Farewell" was only a

dream of my dad's stories melded with some Wong Kar-Wai and some Hou Hsiao-Hsien."

Thanks to "Master of None," Yang had a pre-existing relationship with Ted Sarandos, the streaming giant's chief content officer. So while it was easy to get the script to him, anything beyond a read was hardly a guarantee.

"It's an art house-inflected movie that's almost entirely in Mandarin and Taiwanese and it features no Marvel stars," Yang said with a laugh about its marketability.

But Sarandos didn't need convincing. He loved the script and that was that. The movie was a go.

"I'm incredibly grateful to Netflix for taking a chance and allowing us to make the movie in the way we saw fit," Yang said. That included shooting the past on 16mm film to give it a dreamier feel and the present on digital.

Yang cast Chinese-American actor Tzi Ma to play Pin-Jui (also called Grover) in the present day. Ma, who recently played a version of filmmaker Lulu Wang's father in "The Farewell," knew that his character was inspired by Yang's father, but said that's where the similarities end.

"The first thing Alan told me was his dad was a doctor," Ma said. "Already I know this is a huge departure. (Pin-Jui) is [a] common man. This is a common man's journey."

Regardless, Ma knew just who this character was. "This character is modeled after my brother," Ma said.



Yang

with no white people in it," said Yang from his home in Los Angeles. "This is the only movie I know that starts in Taiwan, segues into Mandarin and ends in English."

But he carried on, winnowing down the 250-page odyssey to something more focused: A story about a Taiwanese man named Pin-Jui who leaves his great love for an arranged marriage and a new life in America. It splits between his life as a young man in the 1960s and the present day with his now-grown daughter.

Yang has described it as his "fever



A man (played by Lee Hong-chi, top right, and Tzi Ma, above left) reflects on the lost love of his youth and his long-ago journey from Taiwan to America in "Tigertail," co-starring Kunjue Li, top left, and Fiona Fu, above right, and directed by Alan Yang.

His brother was an architect in Hong Kong before their family immigrated to the United States, where his degree wasn't recognized.

"Basically, in the '60s there were two businesses we could get into as Asian Americans, Chinese Americans in particular: Restaurants and laundry," Ma said. "So we bought a restaurant on Staten Island and he became the cook."

When they moved, Ma remembers a distinct change in his brother, who was once so vibrant and full of life.

Actress Christine Ko, who plays his grown daughter, Angela, in the present-day scenes, had a similarly personal connection to the material.

"It felt like therapy for me, two years of therapy," Ko said. "I grew up in a home that was a little more strict and wasn't as emotionally forthcoming with discussions of feelings and all that, so I felt like I could really relate to the distance that Angela has with her father."

Netflix had planned on having a premiere and a simultaneous theatrical release for "Tigertail" before theaters shuttered due to coronavirus. Yang said he was a little disappointed that he wouldn't be able to celebrate with everyone who worked on it, but that there are discussions to hold some select screenings down the line and maybe even a make-up premiere.

It also means he won't even be able to watch it with his family.

"I just told my family, this movie is a love letter to you guys, and please don't take offense at anything," Yang said.

Even though things are strange right now, everyone is excited to be working in this moment where Asian American films are having such mainstream success.

"For the first time, it feels like we have solid footing, whereas in the past it always felt like we're the flavor of the month," Ma said. "The talent has always been there; they've just not had the opportunity to show the world how wonderful they are."

WEEKEND: MOVIES

'Tigertail' an affecting intergenerational story

By GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

In the opening 10 minutes of his affecting new film "Tigertail," writer-director Alan Yang introduces us to the movie's central character, Pin-Jui, in three stages of his life — as a young boy, a fledgling adult and, finally, a retiree — asking viewers to reconcile how a once-vital human could have turned so inward that he now leads a life that amounts to solitary confinement.

It's a mystery that Yang reveals methodically, purposefully, building toward a moving resolution that could prompt a few parents to share life stories with their adult children. I mean, we've got the time right now, don't we? And since "Tigertail" is streaming on Netflix, you don't have to be sheltering in the same home to partake. Set up a Zoom meeting for an after-movie heart-to-heart. Just remember to keep a box of tissues within reach.

"Tigertail" examines those unspoken family stories and, specifically, serves as a nuanced look at the Taiwanese immigrant experience — the sacrifices, the loneliness and the sheer exhaustion that can break people and leave them unrecognizable.

The heart of Yang's film — his feature debut after co-creating the vibrant Netflix comedy series "Master of None" and Amazon's underrated marriage story show "Forever" — is the relationship between the adult Pin-Jui (played by the great Tzi Ma) and his grown daughter, Angela (Christine Ko). Or, to be more specific, the absence of a relationship. Their time together is marked by pained silence. What wounds Angela is not just the lack



A Taiwanese factory worker (Lee Hong-chi, right) leaves his homeland to seek opportunity in America, where he struggles to find connection while balancing family and newfound responsibilities in "Tigertail," co-starring Kunjue Li, left.

But when we see Pin-Jui as a carefree young man (a charming Lee Hong-chi), he's far from a tortured soul. Yes, he's impoverished, working in a sugar factory and living with his mother (Kuei-Mei Yang). But he's also a good dancer, picking up his technique from watching American movies, and he's enjoying romancing the beautiful Yuan (Yo-Hsing Fang) with his impetuosity and impeccable appreciation for music. (Who could resist Yao Su Rong?)

Because Yang himself possesses discriminating taste (the music choices on "Master of None" were consistently wide-ranging and inspired), the scenes between Yuan and Pin-Jui owe a certain debt to Wong Kar-wai, boasting a restrained sensuality tinged with sadness. And because we've already glimpsed the graying Pin-Jui, Nabby and stoic, we know, like the entanglements in Wong's masterpieces, this particular story doesn't have a happy ending.

But there are a few stories in "Tigertail." I haven't even mentioned the one that brings Pin-Jui to America, as its revelations are best left to be discovered. (Another surprise: Joan Chen's in this movie, appearing memorably toward the end.) Most of the film's episodes and characters are fully realized, save for Angela's, whose personal upheavals are only broadly sketched. Her journey is left to her father's, separate lives longing for a mutual understanding that eventually, fittingly, begin and end in silence.

"Tigertail" is rated PG for some thematic elements, language, smoking and brief sensuality. Running time: 91 minutes. Available for streaming on Netflix.

of conversation, but her father's willful impenetrability. "Maybe it's easier if we just stopped trying," she tells him.

Certainly, the notion of the emotionally distant Asian father has been mined in movies. What distinguishes "Tigertail" is the way Yang explores Pin-Jui's earlier life as a means of showing how duty and obligation brought him to that place. And

as Yang takes us on that journey with him, he also offers a low-key lesson for redemption — examine the past to escape regret.

Pin-Jui's history in Taiwan is steeped in loss, resulting in tears, which bring about familial reprimands. "Crying never solves anything," his grandmother (Li-li Pan) tells him. "Be strong. Never let anyone see you cry."

'Trolls World Tour' a candy-colored battle of the bands

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Music snobbery is making a comeback.

On the heels of the excellent serial remake of "High Fidelity," about a tasteful Brooklyn record store owner, comes "Trolls World Tour," in which different pixie clans each representing a music genre vie for sonic domination. Both are quaint in their own way, pretending that our musical borders didn't years ago disintegrate into a digital soup.

"Trolls World Tour," a sequel to the 2016 DreamWorks original, had been planned for the theatrical release before the coronavirus pandemic. On April 10, Universal Pictures instead released it straight into the home, as a \$19.99 digital rental — a rare breaking of the theatrical release window by a major studio.

That makes "Trolls World Tour" a kind of trial balloon, albeit a very glittery one. Is it worth it? That may depend on just how bored your housebound kids are. It is, at least, a shiny new object when there are few about.

Directed by Walt Dohrn and David P. Smith, "Trolls World Tour" is a sped-up version of the jukebox musical. It runs through so many songs that it might be better called a Spotify musical, with infinite skips.

Both "Trolls" movies can be hard to look at. They're so garishly colored that I'd recommend dimming your TV set. But when they're not too loud and you've sufficiently shielded your eyes, their sugary highs are pleasant enough and occasionally tuneful. An animated movie can do worse than indoctrinate another generation to the joys of Earth, Wind and Fire's "September."

In "World Tour," our original clan, including Poppy (Anna Kendrick) and Branch (Justin Timberlake), discover a wider world of trolls. The trolls we know believe in the power of pop, but it turns out there are others out there devoted to techno, classical, country, funk and rock. There are even other pockets they find along the way, too, including those for hip-hop, Reggaeton and even dedicated yodelers.



Poppy (voiced by Anna Kendrick, left), and Queen Barb (voiced by Rachel Bloom) appear in a scene from "Trolls World Tour."

It's the Rock Trolls that start the trouble in "World Tour." Their leader, Queen Barb (Rachel Bloom), sets out to dominate the other groups. Armed with heavy-metal power chords and Metallica-esque bombast, Queen Barb plots a rock reign to drown out the other styles.

The plot gives "World Tour" an opportunity to cycle through countless hits, and it does this so speedily that the film often feels less like a story than an impatient, candy-colored battle of the bands. When it slows down, and allows more than a snippet of a song, "Trolls World Tour" is more enjoyable. There's a good hip-hop interlude and a fine Kelly Clarkson country ballad.

Both "Trolls" movies exuberantly exalt the glories of diversity, and maybe some young ones will get a decent primer on a musical landscape far more vast than Kidz Bop. But "World Tour" can also sound like a bad Grammy medley that puts every genre into a blender until the taste is wrung out.

"Trolls World Tour" is rated PG for some mild rude humor. Running time: 94 minutes. Available for streaming on Amazon, Apple TV, Google Play, Vudu and other platforms.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

Bethesda Softworks



PREPARE TO RAZE HELL

Doom Eternal staves off another demonic attack with more content, crushingly hard difficulty level

By CHRISTOPHER BYRD
Special to The Washington Post

Most of the time when playing *Doom Eternal*, I hover between life and death. During those moments, I am both predator and prey.

Dashing around the map, I do my best to avoid the mancubus, an obese demon with cannons for arms that is particularly deadly when encountered in pairs or trios. If I'm low on health, I search frantically for a scrubby zombie, soldier or gargoyle that I can drop with a few shots for health, or broil with an over-the-shoulder flame cannon for armor, or chainsaw in half for some ammo. Because it demands concentration this hulid routine has provided some measure of escape for me over the past few days.

Doom (2016) ranks among my top three shooters of this generation. (For me, its competition for the top slot is either another game published by Bethesda, *MACHINE-GAMES' Wolfenstein 2: The New Colossus* or *Superhot*, for which I'll cheat and say both the regular and VR versions.) Nearly everything about the 2016 game felt inspired, from its archly told story to its frantic gunplay, which encourages on-the-fly strategizing. On the higher difficulty levels, if you couldn't quickly read the combat field and prioritize targets, you likely wouldn't make it very far. I remember the game being more cerebral than I had any right to expect from the poster child for a AAA shooter. If anything, *Doom Eternal* is even more mentally taxing.

Eternal opens more with a whisper than a bang in comparison to the last entry

and, structurally speaking, the priorities appear to be different. Whereas the last game seemed to be in a hurry to show off how vigorous it could be (who can forget the moment where the Doom Slayer rips a computer terminal off a wall to shut up the dude offering a bit of story exposition?), the new game is slower to show its hand and the narrative jolts take a little longer to arrive.

Eternal's opening stages seem much harder than those I remember from the last game. But it's as though they serve to bring the player quickly up to speed on the strategic thinking required to tackle the game's greater challenges. Looking back on them, it was almost as if they exist as a training ground.

After a short intro sets the stage for a demonic invasion of Earth, players find themselves in a nondescript dungeon that evokes the muddy-colored past of old video games. (The environments become more colorful later.) From there, Eternal slowly rolls out its many systems — introducing such things as weapon mods that can be swiped in the heat of battle so that, for example, a shotgun can be turned into a fully automatic weapon or turned into a secondary grenade launcher. Pointers are also given on the weak spots of the game's tougher cast of characters — the ones who don't look as if they can be easily health sources.

The pacing of the encounters in Eternal reminded me of its predecessor. Both love to do things such as introduce a new, difficult enemy-type and then present you with an escalating number of them to face. It didn't take long for my muscle memory to get used to shooting grenades into the toothy maws of cacodemons or popping the shoulder canons off revenants. But the battles feel more grueling. There were times where I found it useful to pause the game after an intense moment, before another intense moment, to settle my composure before diving back in.

Eternal has, so far, struck me more as a

hyper-efficient game than an inspired one (apart from its music, composed by Mick Gordon, which is as dark and propulsive as the last game's soundtrack). Whereas *Doom* shook up the series and resuscitated my fondness for over-the-top, rip-a-demon's-head-off-with-your-hands FPS violence, this feels like more of the same but with larger rewards and more difficulty.

The new frills are nice — such as the Slayer Dungeon where you can go hog wild and sharpen your skills by shooting demons without the threat of dying, or Slayer Gates where you can face off against harder enemies. But they have not yet convinced me that they make for a qualitative improvement.

One aspect of Eternal I've found baffling are its platforming sections, which are annoying, generic and, frankly, unbefitting of the Doom Slayer, who should be able to move between areas in greater style. Why it was thought that I might enjoy interludes of climbing, double-jumping and air dashing to get from place to place where these things have been done much better in other games, I'll never know. But *Doom Eternal* feels like a game that was constructed around pillars rather than guided by vision. If the last game seemed shockingly good, this feels like a careful study of what worked before.

This isn't to say that Eternal's combat isn't satisfying. Far from it. If you want to appreciate just how well animated the game is, turn down the music and throw on an album by someone you like. With all respect to Eternal's wonderful electronic/industrial/metal soundtrack, I find its fantastical violence a wonderful backdrop to the music of, say, Billie Eilish.

Doom Eternal is a challenging, engaging shooter that caters to one's predatorial impulses. It will keep you on your toes.

Platforms: PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One

Online: bethesda.net/en/game/doom

New game network to launch during quarantine downtime

Launching a television startup at any time is not easy. Launching one during a pandemic? You might as well attempt a crossbow elimination while searching for the hidden gnome in *Fortnite*.

Yet that's what the founders of VENN, a videogame television network that aspires to be MTV for the gamer generation, are attempting. The company's leaders say they will move up a planned launch of their service from September to July because more Americans are staying home and playing video games while under quarantine.

"In terms of timing, we think our audience needs this now more than ever," said Ben Kusin, one of VENN's co-founders.

VENN raised \$17 million last year from videogame power-brokers, including executives at Riot and Blizzard Entertainment. Kusin, a former executive at Vivendi Games and the son of GameStop founder Gary Kusin, teamed up with Ariel Horn, who produces televised esports, to form the company.

The network, which stands for Videogame Entertainment & News Network, aims to fill the space between Twitch and other online platforms that largely stream game play and the mainstream television networks that rarely cover gamer culture. Basically, it's polished TV content for consumers more likely to fire up *Call of Duty* than "Better Call Saul."

The VENN executives are terming the launch a "beta." The July debut, they say, will be scaled down — some 35 programming hours per week compared to the 55 that had been planned for September. And while no shows have been created as a result of the pandemic, founders say they have had to lean into the parts of their programming slate that can be more easily produced at this time.

So a documentaries with overseas shoots? Shelved. A late-night show or content featuring gamers and influencers? More likely.

"We know it's not easy to do everything we want to do," Horn said. "But we can be on our heels, or we can be proactive."

The partners have long felt that gaming, a \$150 billion business, is ripe for a full-time television network. The most prominent effort to date, a mid-2000's channel called G4, was niche and short-lived.

But VENN executives point to the recent spike in gaming popularity — many Americans are playing more while under lockdown because of COVID-19 — as a particular reason their service fills a need. Activision Blizzard's *Call of Duty: Warzone* brought in 30 million players in 10 days, according to the company, while Nintendo's *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* last month generated sales of nearly 2 million copies in its first three days in Japan as gamers sought to build a perfect oasis — in-universe if not in the real world.

— Steven Zeitchik

The Washington Post



WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

iStock

Late-night pandemic illusions

You're not imagining it: We're all having intense coronavirus dreams

BY RACHEL SCHNALZER
Los Angeles Times

What do a tidal wave, a lethal injection and masses of thin white worms have in common?

They are all images that have cropped up in dreams people are having about the coronavirus pandemic.



Many people are reporting more vivid dreams while self-quarantining, taking to social media to comment on the phenomenon. Take a moment to think back on your dreams over the past few weeks. Have they seemed a little more intense — or upsetting — than usual?

"I feel pain in my right shoulder, and see a huge grasshopper-like insect there. It has already crawled through the fabric of my sweater and is now gouging my flesh," one respondent described in a dream survey currently underway and conducted by Deirdre Leigh Barrett, Ph.D., author of "The Committee of Sleep: How Artists, Scientists, and Athletes Use Their Dreams for Creative Problem Solving — and How You Can Too" and an assistant professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School's psychiatry department.

Barrett supports the idea that people are remembering more vivid dreams while in quarantine and is currently studying dreams that people are having about the coronavirus pandemic. That's where the tidal wave, lethal injection and worms imagery originated — they all surfaced in the dreams of people responding to her survey. "I've seen a lot of bug dreams," Barrett says.

In Barrett's survey, respondents have reported dreams that are clearly related to the coronavirus — contracting the illness themselves, or having an aging parent become sick. Others are more metaphorical, like dreams about in-

sects. And while many are experiencing wilder dreams, doctors and nurses may be experiencing the phenomenon more intensely than others. "It's my informal impression that health care providers are having more extreme nightmares," Barrett explains.

But why are people dreaming so vividly during the pandemic?

First of all, changes in one's routine can stir up dream recall, explains Barrett. "When waking life is more vivid, so is dream life," agrees Rubin Naiman, Ph.D., a psychologist, clinical assistant professor of medicine and the sleep and dream specialist at the University of Arizona. "My patients routinely increase dreaming at times like this."

Naiman draws a parallel between the gut, which decides what food we consume is useful and what is waste, and the brain, which similarly consumes and processes information throughout the day. When we observe something normal, our brains don't need to "digest" it, he says. However, when something out of the ordinary happens — like a pandemic — our brains may process the experience through dreaming. That's why "difficult-to-digest" experiences may give us dreams, Naiman explains. "At a time like this, we're all directly or symbolically digesting information about the threat, about contagion," he says.

Another major reason why we're dreaming like crazy? Many of us are getting more sleep than usual while cooped

up inside.

"Dream recall is very correlated with how many hours of sleep you get, and most of America runs around pretty sleep-deprived," Barrett explains, adding that if you've been sleep-deprived and are only now catching up on sleep, you may be experiencing more intense dreams. Dreams occur during our REM cycles, and the more REM sleep we get in a night, the more dreams we typically experience. As your night of sleep progresses, your REM cycles get longer. That's why we do most of our dreaming in the latter third of the night," Naiman says.

It's also possible that people may be dreaming more about aspects of life they miss while in quarantine. Barrett has noticed a parallel between dreams about the coronavirus pandemic and dreams had by a group of British soldiers imprisoned in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp during World War II. The soldiers' dreams included elements of yearning for things they couldn't have or enjoy while detained. "They had more food content (in their dreams) than any other sample I've ever seen," Barrett explains. In her current dream survey, she has noticed some respondents are dreaming about foods they aren't able to have in quarantine.

So, can we learn anything from the dreams we experience during the coronavirus crisis?

"Sometimes you can get a practical, useful idea," Barrett suggests, while also

pointing out that dreams can indicate feelings that are repressed during waking life. For someone who is experiencing more anxious dreams while in quarantine, Barrett posits, "They may be more scared (of the coronavirus pandemic) than they think."

Many experts recommend journaling as a helpful way to reflect on and learn from our dreams. Barrett, a proponent of dream journaling, explains, "We forget dreams so easily that writing them down helps us continue to relate to them longer. You just see another side to yourself!" She recommends looking for patterns in dreams and keeping tabs on any themes that come up regularly. Barrett isn't fussy about how people dream journal, saying that while some people may enjoy keeping old-fashioned logs of their dreams, others may find dictating to a smartphone easier and less time-intensive.

For those who have trouble remembering their dreams, Naiman suggests, "The first step to remembering a dream is to linger in grogginess." Upon waking, keep your eyes closed and wait for the memories of the dream to resurface. Then write your recollections of the dream down — or draw, if that feels more natural, Naiman says. He encourages dreamers to recognize that the waking world and the dream world are connected, saying, "Bridge whatever memory you have of the dream into the waking world."

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING



Europe

KNOW & GO

HUNT BROTHERS PIZZA

Address: Building 600, 92655 Grafenwoehr
Hours: Monday-Sunday, 5 a.m.-10 p.m., subject to change. Takeout available.
Prices: Between \$2.89 and \$9.99
Menu: English
Phone: +49 09641 9363400

RESTAURANTE DA PEPPINO

Address: Neue Amberger Str. 181, 92655 Grafenwoehr
Hours: Closed Monday; Tuesday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5 p.m.-9 p.m. Takeout available.
Prices: Between 7 and 18 euros
Menu: German and English
Phone: +49 09641 454054
 — Immanuel Johnson

Left: Restaurante Da Peppino, located just off-post from the Grafenwoehr, Germany, training area, is open for takeout, offering pizza like spinach and ham, inset, and other dishes.

Below: The Hunt Brothers Pizza kiosk is located inside the Grafenwoehr Shopette Express with choices like the sausage and the loaded slices, inset.

PHOTOS BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

Crusty challenge

Hunt Brothers Pizza and Da Peppino will both satisfy your hunger, but one is clearly better

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

The takeout choices are limited right now for the thousands of soldiers and others at the Grafenwoehr Training Area in Bavaria, even for a pizza.

For those restricted to Grafenwoehr, the simple choice is Hunt Brothers, an addition over the past year to several bases in Germany. Off post, there's Restaurante Da Peppino, a local mainstay since 2009.

Hunt Brothers pizza has convenience going for it — it's in the shopette, it's open most of the day and there's a respectable variety. If you're not that hungry, they sell slices, as well as " hunks" that equal 2-3 slices.

Da Peppino has only 13-inch and 16-inch offerings, but they're also a full-service restaurant with pasta, salmon, schnitzel and most of the regular dishes you're likely to find at an Italian spot in Germany. But in this case, I stuck to pizza for the sake of comparison.

At Hunt Brothers, I tried a slice of the sausage and bacon, and another of the "loaded"

pizza, which had pepperoni, green peppers, black olives, banana peppers, onions, mushrooms, cheese and ham. At Peppino, I went for a ham and spinach pizza.

Was it a fair contest between Peppino's wood-fired oven pizza and Hunt Brothers' pizza that had been sitting under a lamp? Probably not, but hey, I was hungry.

The Peppino pizza's flavors all came through, with a good balance between the toppings, cheese, tomato and bread. The loaded Hunt Brothers slice was just too much grease. The sausage and bacon pizza didn't have its toppings falling off and was the better of the Hunt Brothers options.

The winner on taste and presentation? Da Peppino. If you're short on cash or hungry at odd hours, Hunt Brothers satisfies a craving, and they do make-to-order pizzas as well.

Da Peppino also offers either a free soft drink or bottle of wine for orders over 35 euros, according to their takeout menu.

johnson.immanuel@stripes.com
Twitter: Manny_Stripes



WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



Take a hike

In the woods near Ramstein, you can feed the deer and grab a pizza

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

With movie theaters, outdoor cafes, parks, shops and swimming pools closed in Germany during the coronavirus pandemic, the great outdoors beckons.

But coronavirus restrictions on Defense Department personnel in Germany limit the distance you can go in pursuit of outdoor adventure to less than a 20-mile radius from your home.

If you live in Rheinland-Pfalz, that's not a problem. The Kaiserslautern area has countless trails to explore, from those criss-crossing the low mountains of the Palatinate Forest south of the city to the open farmland and meadows to the west, near Ramstein Air Base.

For the past few weeks, my kids and I have been keeping stir-craziness at bay by venturing out on hikes.

Recently, we discovered something new while making our way down a favorite trail near the Seewoog, a small lake near

Ramstein-Miesenbach.

Walking northeast toward Mackenbach, we followed a dirt path that crosses a meadow and leads into the woods. Right before the trail makes a long uphill climb, we took a path to the left and found something unexpected: Deer that live in an enclosed meadow in what looks to be a small animal reserve.

There were more than a half-dozen deer, grazing and sitting in the dirt. Some were completely white, and one had antlers. A deer herein, perhaps?

Most of the animals paid us little heed, either napping with half-shut eyes or nipping at an itch on their hindquarters. They didn't even flinch when we called to them — except for the one with the antlers.

He immediately sauntered over to us, getting so close we could reach through the gaps in the wire fence and gently touch his rack.

My kids found a few tufts of green grass and some pine-needle branches to poke through the fence. He ate the grass and pine needles and brushed his antlers against the branches. Whichever direction we went along the fence line, the buck followed.

The interaction was a nice diversion from being cooped up at home. After circling around the deer reserve, we headed back toward the Seewoog and explored another trail, this one in the direction of Kusel.

We covered about five miles but with more time, or a bicycle, we could have done a lot more. The trail from the Seewoog to Kusel is nearly 17 miles, and to Weilerbach, it's just over four miles. We saw serious hikers walking briskly with trekking poles, and people on bikes, walking their dogs or riding horses. Social distancing was hard at times, but we did our best to give everyone a wide berth.

In non-pandemic times, the children's playground by the lake is open, as is an Imbiss that sells hot food and drinks in winter and ice cream in the summer. But in these times of the virus and social distancing, they're closed.

The nearby Seewoog pizzeria is still open for takeout, though, so we picked up two brick-oven pizzas and headed home.

svan.jennifer@stripes.com
Twitter: @stripesktown

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Seewoog lake is on the outskirts of Ramstein-Miesenbach, across the street from the Seewoog pizzeria restaurant. The address is Waldstrasse 43, 66877 Ramstein-Miesenbach. It's less than a 10-minute drive from the west gate of Ramstein Air Base. The deer reserve is about a 10- to 15-minute walk from the Seewoog parking lot, walking on the trail toward Mackenbach into the woods.

FOOD

The kiosk next to the lake is currently closed, but the pizzeria across the street is open for takeout.

INFORMATION

Online: Komoot.com; includes hiking and mountain biking routes around the lake.

— Jennifer H. Svan



A deer in a small reserve in the woods between the Seewoog in Ramstein-Miesenbach and the village of Mackenbach stands on a snack of pine needles offered through the fence.



The Seewoog is a good starting point for hiking and biking in the countryside outside of Kaiserslautern.



A hike through the woods between the Seewoog in Ramstein-Miesenbach and Mackenbach village in Germany leads past a small enclosure with deer.



A sign in the woods behind the Seewoog lake in Ramstein-Miesenbach shows animals that can be found in Germany.

Cruises still being booked for next year

By HUGO MARTÍN
Los Angeles Times

The coronavirus pandemic left dozens of cruise ships temporarily stranded at sea, not allowed to dock because of onboard outbreaks of the deadly virus.

It happened with the Norwegian Jewel in the South Pacific, the Zaandam off the coast of Florida and the Grand Princess in the waters off Northern California, among several others.

Despite such harrowing news, Chris Schuck hasn't canceled three cruises he has booked over the next two years, with the earliest in September.

"After this virus, I truly believe the cruise lines will institute even more guidelines to keep guests and crew safe," said Schuck, who works in the scheduling and labor department at Walt Disney World in Florida.

Schuck isn't the only cruise fan who remains faithful. Travel agents and industry experts say bookings for cruise sailings in 2021 are up considerably compared with precoronavirus data.

Cruise lines that canceled sailings in the past few months have offered refunds or credits toward future trips. Still, travel agents and experts say the booking rates for cruise trips in 2021 represent more than just passengers rebooking their canceled trips.

In the past 45 days, Cruise Compete.com, an online cruise marketplace, has seen a 40% increase in bookings for 2021 compared with 2019, said Heidi M. Allison, president of the company. Only 11% of the bookings are from people whose 2020 trips were canceled, she said.

"People are still booking cruises and are anxious to sail again when this is all over," she said.

In an analysis of the cruise industry, Swiss banking giant UBS wrote that cruise booking volume for 2021 was up 9% in the past 30 days compared with the same time last year.

The UBS report, issued March 31, said the bookings for 2021 cruise trips included people using their credit for canceled sailings but added that volume "still shows a surprising resilience in desire to book a cruise."

Booking volume was even higher for trips to Asia and Alaska, UBS said, "so there is pent-up demand for Asia travel next year."

AAA has also noticed an increase in cruise bookings beyond the numbers attributed to people rebooking canceled trips, said Paula Twidale, a senior vice president at AAA Travel.

"We are optimistic that once this crisis is behind us, travel will rebound quickly, which bodes well for 2021," she said.

An online poll of more than 4,600 cruise passengers found that about 75% said they plan to either resume taking cruises at the same frequency as before or more often once the coronavirus crisis subsides, according to CruiseCritic.com, a cruise review site.

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STAY



WEEKEND: TRAVEL

The trail now less traveled



Damascus, Va., which relies heavily on business from thru-hikers on the Appalachian Trail, is quieter than usual March 31.

PHOTOS BY SARAH BLAKE MORGAN/AP



The Appalachian Trail has closed due to the pandemic, forcing hikers to head home

BY SARAH BLAKE MORGAN
Associated Press

When Alexandra Eagle first mentioned plans to hike the entire Appalachian Trail alongside her new husband, her sister told her they'd either be divorced in five months or married forever.

Eagle, 33, and Jonathan Hall, 36, had just moved out of their Brooklyn apartment when they married on March 2, the third anniversary of the blind date that brought them together. They had talked about the Appalachian Trail in their first conversation and, when it came time to plan a honeymoon, they decided to make the hike.

"This was going to be an epic adventure," Eagle told The Associated Press.

The couple spent a year researching, training and saving before setting off on the roughly 2,190-mile journey seven days after their wedding. They knew about the new coronavirus spreading across the globe but considered themselves lucky to be trading Brooklyn for a tent on the trail, especially as New York fell under restrictions to prevent the virus' spread.

"We always figured that being out on the trail and seeing a dozen people a day was a fine position to be in," Hall said.

As the pandemic grows, hikers face the difficult decision to postpone their dreams or ignore warnings and forge ahead. Like virtually every other entity in the U.S., the Appalachian Trail Conservancy began issuing COVID-19 safety guidance in March. But social distancing and hand-washing suggestions soon shifted to urging all hikers to leave the trail immediately. Shelters and privies were shut down, and volunteer programs



Above, Alexandra Eagle and Jonathan Hall soak up their last moments hiking the Appalachian Trail in Cosby, Tenn., March 30. The couple is postponing the roughly 2,190-mile hike until the coronavirus pandemic ends. Below, a notice is nailed to a tree along a portion of the trail in Cosby, Tenn. Hikers have been asked to leave the trail immediately as trailheads continue to close due to the pandemic.

were halted. On April 1, the conservancy and 29 other trail-maintaining clubs asked federal officials to close the trail until the end of the month.

Though more than 3,000 "thru-hikers" set out to traverse the length of the trail each year, only about 25% successfully make the hike from Georgia to Maine, which typically takes about six months.

Eagle and Hall never considered any scenario but finishing.

They picked up speed as they moved into the Great Smoky Mountains along the Tennessee-North Carolina border. They woke to sunrise on Clingmans Dome — the trail's highest point — a view that seemed to sum up exactly what they'd hoped for from their newlywed adventure.

At the same time, families across the U.S. braced for lockdowns as COVID-19 spread through cities and towns, claim-



ing more lives. Days would pass before Eagle and Hall had enough cellphone service to see just how dire the crisis had become.

Follow thru-hiker Kimberly Selvage was 30 minutes from Hot Springs, N.C., when she called a local hostel to confirm her reservation.

"He was like, 'Ma'am, I think you've been in the woods too long; the whole world is shutting

virus fear was changing the vibe of my hike,'" said Selvage, who started the hike, in part, to experience the culture of trail towns. "I chose to pause to get the full experience when it was less controversial."

Selvage rented an SUV and drove back home to Las Vegas. She slept in the back of the car. Now, she's renting out a room in a friend's house until the all-clear is given to hike again.

"I still think I was safer on the trail," Selvage said.

For Eagle and Hall, deciding to stay or go was brutal. The couple debated day after day as they hiked over rocks and waterfalls. They hadn't yet come to terms with their choice when they loaded their backpacks into the trunk of a rental car in Tennessee.

"Even right now, I don't know if we're doing the right thing," Eagle said through tears.

Their decision came down to the small chance that they might catch and spread the virus, something Eagle said she couldn't live with. For now, they'll stay with her parents in Louisiana, which has more than 12,000 confirmed cases.

"Is that better? That's hard to say," she said.

They'll try to stay in shape while they wait for the all-clear. Hall joked about looking into a treadmill sale he saw online. But as the timeline becomes grimmer with each passing day, he thinks they might be saying goodbye to the trail for good.

His wife disagrees and sees them starting again in a few months. Until then, she's trying to keep her disappointment in perspective.

"I'm just trying to focus in on the fact that we are in such a better position than most of the world," she said.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL



Let your mind wander when your feet can't

Amid the pandemic, an adventure addict finds solace in his imagination

BY JOHN BRILEY

Special to The Washington Post

OK, I get it: I'm not going anywhere anytime soon. So as an inveterate adventure traveler facing a monthslong adventure deficit, I decided in mid-March that I had to get resourceful. So in the past three weeks, I've been kite surfing in Hawaii, heli-skiing in British Columbia, kayaking in Baja California and mountain biking in the Arizona desert. And I've done it all without leaving my neighborhood.

I'm not talking about virtual travel videos or Oculus Rift or recreational drugs, each of which I'm sure has its virtues. Instead, I'm traveling using only the power of my consciousness, a technique I learned four years ago when a sports injury forced me to cancel a long-awaited adventure trip and my physical therapist, Annie Johnstone, offered this wisdom:

"You can still go. Just go there in your mind. Immerses in it. Feel it and be grateful for it."

I did as she said, and although I wasn't delighted about staying home, I found calming sanctuary in the chambers of my brain where travel memories reside. I sat on my couch, took a few meditative breaths, cast out the demons of FOMO and came pretty close to re-experiencing the feeling of carving down a wave face while steering an airborne kite, a tropically sun baking sea salt into my back. And while I couldn't share the celebratory beers I knew my friends were enjoying, I could, with some neurological effort,

almost taste those too.

One reason this exercise worked, says Tom Gilovich, a psychology professor at Cornell University who has studied the happiness people derive from experiences, is that "experiential consumption resists adaptation." That's a fancy way of saying that the gratification we derive from a great trip far outlasts the positive emotions of buying, say, a new rug.

"We quickly lose interest in a new material possession, but, as Humphrey Bogart said, 'We'll always have Paris,'" he explains. "I often recall some of my favorite hikes in New Zealand and think, 'Wow, I can't believe I got to do that!'"

This is a good place to acknowledge the obvious: Any annoyance that I or any other healthy individual is experiencing because we can't take a leisure trip pales in comparison to the problems many people face every day, especially those who are sick, grieving, jobless or otherwise unmoored because of COVID-19.

Still, traveler frustrations are valid and may be most acute in hardcore adventurers, says Frank Farley, a Temple University psychology professor and former president of the American Psychological Association who coined the term "Type T personality" to describe thrill seekers and risk takers.

"People who are governed by Type T behavior are probably among the least likely to enjoy" the physical limitations of a quarantine, Farley says. "It's the exact opposite of what they want, and they'll probably start looking for a 'Type T breakout' — a way to escape incarceration."

For some, that might mean throwing caution to the wind and traveling in search of adventure — and by now you don't need me to tell you how socially irresponsible that would be. Instead, Farley recommends shifting from what he calls "T physical" to "T-mental." My consciousness journeys are one way to do that because they allow me to kinda-sorta believe I'm engaged in a sport, which in turn triggers at least a minor surge of the pleasure-yielding neurotransmitter dopamine in my brain. Other T-mental activities include reading adventure literature — among my favorites are accounts of early polar explorations and the first forays by foreigners into the Sahara — and journaling on past trips.

"People love stories, and adventurers are usually very interesting in the sense that they've let go of the handrails," he says. "If you've done interesting adventures, share them. Your friends and family would love to have that. You're not going to be out there for a while, so sit down and write."

But what Farley said next really grabbed me. In his extensive study of adventurers, he found one prevailing trait: their focus on the future.

"Sure, they shared their stories of all they'd done, but mostly it was all about the next gig, the next huge challenge," he says. "So use this time to plan your big post-pandemic adventure," with friends or other like-minded travelers through, for example, online clubs and forums.

Of course, even with stay-at-home

directives and other harsh realities, the entire world isn't shut down, so get out locally if you can do so safely and legally. For me, that has meant mountain biking, kayaking, trail running and kitesurfing — all of which have been somewhat pinched by weather, work, parenting duties and governors' orders.

So when I'm really starting to go nuts, I recall a quote from the late novelist Philip Roth's book "The Dying Animal":

"You tasted it. Isn't that enough? Of what do you ever get more than a taste? That's all we're given in life, that's all we're given of life. A taste. There is no more."

Instinctively I want to shout, "No, Philip Roth, a taste isn't nearly enough, and who in their right mind would accept that?" On the other hand, I think about all those people who've never had the resources to leave their city, village or slum, people who can't even imagine backpacking up \$600 boots, stepping into \$900 skis and paying \$150 for a seven-hour lift ticket so they can ski the day away, pausing only for a \$30 lunch.

From that vantage, a taste seems far more than I deserve, no matter how hard I've toiled in my first-world job. As I type this, my wife is reading a news story about Indian workers walking, in some cases hundreds of miles and with small children in tow, to their native villages because the COVID-19 shutdown ended any hope they had of making money in the cities. So, yeah, pausing to feel ridiculously lucky in life can help, too.

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

A complicated 'new normal'

Amid coronavirus-induced chaos and madness, making plans can create a bit of normalcy

By JOCELYN NOVECCK

Associated Press

As owners of a wedding and event-planning business, Karilyn Lopez and Curtis Rogers have always known how the best-laid plans can go awry. But there's no way they could have imagined just a few weeks ago what would happen to their very own wedding plans.

First, the joyous bash they'd been meticulously planning for many months — a three-day celebration for 200 guests — was thrown into indefinite limbo. Then they both tested positive for the coronavirus.

Yet now, as they recover in quarantine and try to keep their distance from each other in a one-bedroom New York City apartment, Lopez and Rogers are still making wedding plans — methodically and, indeed, defiantly. After all, they're planners. It's what keeps them going. "I definitely had one or two meltdowns," says Lopez, 32, who is still experiencing symptoms but feels she's on the mend. "Which I look back and realize is so silly, considering what people are going through." But now, she says, wedding planning has become therapy: "It went from making me insane, to keeping me sane."

Making plans. In normal times, it's a process we don't really think about. But during this pandemic, the process of planning — be it a short-term grocery list or organizing an entire summer wedding — has taken on an entirely different meaning, serving for some as a life preserver amid all the fear and uncertainty.

It depends on the personality. Some people thrive by living in the moment. But others really need their plans.

"For many, having schedules and structure and timelines and things they can count on is important. Knowing they can count on something happening gives them security, some stability, some purpose," says Helen Park, a family therapist, social worker and specialist in mindfulness.

In current conditions, Park notes, even non-planner types are seeking ways to organize their lives. If you're hunkered down at home, suddenly Friday doesn't seem like Friday because the weekend hardly feels different. Monday morning carries little of that back-to-the-trenches feeling, even if a Zoom call is waiting at the kitchen table.

On social media, jokes abound about this unsettling sense of timelessness.

"What year is it this week?" asks one meme. "It's the 87th of March," goes another. Or: "Today is Blursday the fortyteenth of Mairilay."

As Park conducts therapy sessions to help families eke out a quasi-normal existence, she finds them unmoved "because it's not just day-to-day life that has been upended," she says. "The nature of what we're dealing with is so new and unknown. Is it two weeks like this, two months, until the summer, or after? If we knew, we could start to internally organize our lives. But the sands are shifting constantly."

Lopez and Rogers refuse to accept they won't be getting married on Aug. 1. A few days ago, they agreed their wedding would proceed, whether as the extravaganza they'd planned or, if necessary, a marriage via Zoom, Lopez says, "with our immediate families and our officiant in our living room."

"As silly as it sounds, this gave me hope," she says of the decision. The couple recently wrote a blog post promising friends their invitations soon — and untouched.

Kasey Woods cannot give her son his senior prom via Zoom, much as she'd like to. Woods, a New York mother of three who works in public relations, alternates her anxiety about the pandemic with feelings of pride for her oldest son, who's been accepted for the fall to Howard University.

She was hoping that attending admitted students day would seal the deal for him, since he's choosing between several schools. That, of course, was canceled, along with prom and a surprise 18th birthday party she'd been planning.



KARINA L. LOPEZ/AP

Karilyn Lopez, left, poses with her fiance Curtis Rogers and their dog Fifi on April 4 at their home in the Long Island City section of the Queens borough of New York.



TREYLN LEWIS/AP

Kasey Woods works from her home in Mount Vernon, N.Y. Woods, a mother of three who works in public relations, alternates her anxiety about the pandemic with feelings of pride for her oldest son, who's been accepted for the fall to Howard University.

And yet Woods keeps planning, too, whatever she can. "One of my ways of regulating my life and my mental health is that I have to write everything down," she says. "My notebook and my calendars are my lifeline."

Michelle Bushee, a real estate broker in Pittsburgh, has always been an avid planner. And she's old-school: Bushee eschews digital planners for the paper kind

— not little black books, but those big spiral volumes with expansive pages that she normally fills up with meetings, house showings, closings and volunteer activities.

"My weeks used to look really scary," she says, meaning scary busy. Now her planner instills a different kind of fear: The entire month of April is empty — big white pages of miserable nothingness. "Now THIS," she says, "scares me."

A couple of weeks ago, Bushee had what she admits was "a really bad mental health week, I'll be honest. I think it was the shock and the anger of the situation. I kind of got off track."

She decided to double down on her morning routine. For years, this has included rituals like journaling, writing down three things she's grateful for and deciding what will be the "win" of the day.

"Just something so that at the end of the day, regardless of how crappy it was, there's something that was a win — even taking the dog for a walk," she says. Most helpful, though, is when she's able to do something for others — for example, a recent initiative to deliver 500 catered meals to a hospital emergency room for health care workers.

"I find that my purpose is somewhat displaced right now, and I'm trying to find another purpose," she says. "So part of my planning has become, 'Who can I help today?'"

A big music fan, she's also holding onto the list of concerts she bought tickets for this spring and summer: the Rolling Stones, the Doobie Brothers, Dave Matthews. Some have been canceled; others surely will be. But she keeps the list.

Park, the family therapist, appreciates that people need their plans. She worries, though, that trying to hold onto a rigid structure that no longer makes sense may produce anxiety in itself. "You can be putting in a lot of energy to fight to keep that structure in place," she says.

If a day is particularly bad — and Bushee says she's had plenty — she finds she can at least draw comfort from a very simple bit of prescribed structure that's really a built-in piece of planning in miniature: a recipe. Cooking at home has become not only a necessity, but a release.

"I made chicken pot pie for my family the other day," she says, "including homemade crust, which I never do. You know what? It was pretty awesome."

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

LIFE SKILLS 101

The pandemic provides the perfect time to learn how to be self-sufficient

BY JULIA RUBIN
Associated Press

Mending clothes. Cutting hair. Fixing a squeaky door or a dripping faucet. Baking bread.

A generation or two ago, household skills like these were common, learned at home and at school. Then it became easier to toss things out rather than to fix them, quicker to call the professionals.

Now, in an unsettling era of staying at home and not knowing what will be available tomorrow, the old ways are being dusted off and relearned.

Since the coronavirus has shuttered many small businesses that do our work and supply our things, millions of people trying to stay home are driven by necessity — or boredom — to do more cooking, cleaning, fixing, grooming and other practical skills themselves.

"It's during uncertain times like these when we take stock of all the basic life skills we've forgotten, or never learned in the first place, because they sure could come in handy right about now," says Erin Bried, a magazine editor in Brooklyn and author of "How to Sew a Button: And Other Nifty Things Your Grandmother Knew" and "How to Build a Fire: And Other



Handy Things Your Grandfather Knew."

In this dark and difficult time, it can be an emotional lift to find that you're more capable around the house than you thought.

"I accomplished something real today!" Maria Kernahan, a real estate agent and children's book author, said after installing a new thermostat herself in her Castle Park, Mich., house. She followed online advice to figure out the wiring in the old house. Her husband, meanwhile, has begun chopping wood.

"We're making this up as we go along," she said.

Bill Hughes, a business consultant in University Place, Wash., had to wash some shirts and didn't want to put them away wrinkled.

"When I was a graduate student, I would iron my own shirts to save some money. It was tedious, and I looked forward to the day when I could afford to drop off my shirts to be cleaned," says Hughes, 59. "Since my dry cleaners is closed, I sat off the iron and ironing board, turned on some Huey Lewis and the News, and went at it."

Janice Simonsen, who works in corporate communications in Philadelphia, helped sew masks for medical personnel, following instructions on a YouTube video.



Yes, you can still order

takes in, in most places and call the plumber or electrician. But more people are trying to do that only when absolutely needed. Hardware stores have seen high demand for home repair and lawn tools. Social media forums everywhere are full of posts from newbies planting vegetable gardens, giving themselves haircuts and baking bread — especially sourdough. Lots of sourdough.

YouTubers have seen a spike of more than 100% in average daily views of videos with "Cook with Me" in the title since March 15 compared to the rest of the year, said spokeswoman Veronica Navarrete.

"We're seeing this trend across several verticals," including cleaning, she said.

For her book, Bried interviewed women who had lived through the Great Depression and imparted lessons on how to



make do and get by.

"I haven't pulled my sewing machine out for many years. I never really had the time," she says. "Those junior high sewing classes kicked back in."

She plans to keep the machine out and try some projects, like pillow covers, that she's put off for years. "It felt good to create something useful again," Simonsen says.

Yes, you can still order takes in, in most places and call the plumber or electrician. But more people are trying to do that only when absolutely needed. Hardware stores have seen high demand for home repair and lawn tools. Social media forums everywhere are full of posts from newbies planting vegetable gardens, giving themselves haircuts and baking bread — especially sourdough. Lots of sourdough.

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"We're seeing this trend across several verticals," including cleaning, she said.

For her book, Bried interviewed women who had lived through the Great Depression and imparted lessons on how to

make do and get by. "I feel a new, closer connection to all of their stories now," she says. "It was a difficult time, and it left its mark on all of them. I think this pandemic, too, will leave its mark on us much in the same way. It's caused us all to halt our lives and reevaluate, maybe for the first time, what is truly important and what we're equipped to handle."

Jeanne Huntley, who taught high school home economics for 35 years in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, thinks society lost something important when schools phased out home economics and shop classes in favor of computer science, robotics and STEM. "A lot of younger people have been brought up in a consumer society — 'You don't fix things, you replace them,'" she says. "Parents are busy, too, and there's not a lot of time to pass on those skills. But knowing you can make things and fix things gives us a sense of confidence in ourselves."

This is not new for everyone. There's always been a countercurrent of people yearning to get back to basics.

The DIY movement has blossomed in recent years, and long before the coronavirus, "urban homesteaders" experi-



HOLLY BEMISS/AP

Erin Bried sews face masks April 3 with her daughters Ellie, 9, left, and Bea, 4. Bried is the author of "How to Sew a Button: And Other Nifty Things Your Grandmother Knew," and "How to Build a Fire: And Other Handy Things Your Grandfather Knew."



BILL HUGHES/AP

The ironing board of Bill Hughes, a business consultant who lives in University Place, Wash., is getting use for the first time since Hughes was a graduate student now that his dry cleaners is closed.

mented with backyard chickens, homemade dyes, wooden toys and organic food. Concerns over climate change have kick-started a movement toward buying fewer things and leaving a lighter footprint on the environment: "Reduce, reuse, recycle."

Now, in a time of feared shortages and limited mobility, this emphasis on self-sufficiency is going wider.

Shawn Bowers, co-author with her husband, David, of a book about life skills called "The Useful Book," embraces the trend. But she cautions people to be smart — and check out books and YouTube videos first.

"I'm urging you to boldly go and try something new, but not something that you know is way outside your ability ... You could probably wire a lamp, but don't mess around with the circuit board in your house," she says. "If you make a mess — assuming you don't break something you really need — you can always call the professionals when we're out the other side."

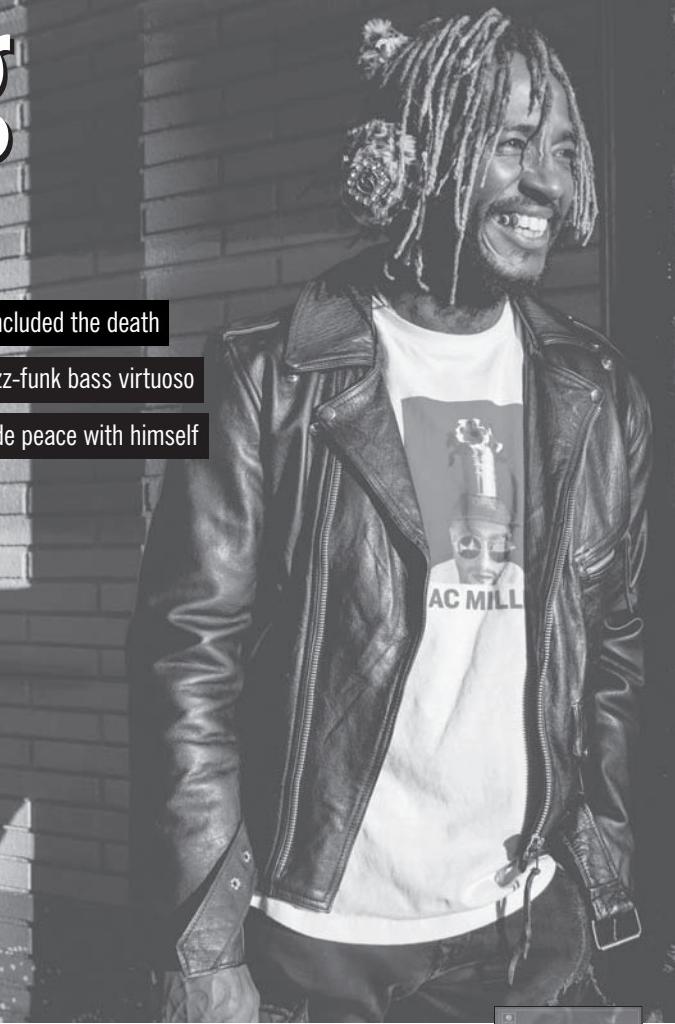
Even the Bowerses, fix-it pros who live outside Dublin, Ireland, with their two teenage sons, "have a plumbing problem that's complicated" to deal with. "And," she says, "we're just going to have to wait."

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Getting in tune

After a 'really, really hard year' that included the death of his best friend and collaborator, jazz-funk bass virtuoso Thundercat beat his demons and made peace with himself

By JEFF WEISS ■ Special to The Washington Post



hey all know Thundercat here: the weathered, seen-it-all counter-man who reserves the lanes, the acne-ridden teenager handing out floppy and slick leather shoes, the waiter bringing heaping platters of fruit and bowls of matzo ball soup. To them, the interstellar jazz bassist is practically family. But don't mistake this for "Cheers."

The Pinz Bowling Center in Studio City is no insular neighborhood tavern, but rather one of the most popular social nexuses in Los Angeles (at least in pre-pandemic days). It attracts everyone from stoned Valley high schoolers to the Los Angeles Lakers, young working-class families to those old

enough to remember when bowling was televised every Saturday afternoon on ABC. And one regular is Thundercat, nee Stephen Bruner, who never fails to abide.

To be fair, it is impossible to forget Thundercat. On this Tuesday night in early February, he's wearing oversized cat-eye pink sunglasses and red silk shorts seemingly designed for a boxer obsessed with Edo-period Japanese woodblock prints. His magenta dreadlocks are partially covered by Gucci headphones. There's a fanny pack slung around his black Pokemon sweatshirt, a nest of gold chains dangling around his neck, and his shoes are leopard

print. He looks like the star of an Afro-futurist manga about George Clinton's P-Funk Mothership: The Next Generation. But this isn't a pose. Thundercat used to amble through his native South Central in the warzone late '90s wearing a tuxedo T-shirt.

"Haven't seen you in a minute," the gravelly-voiced clerk says, swiping Thundercat's credit card and letting us know the lane will be available in 15 minutes or so. "Everything OK?"

"It was a really, really hard year," Thundercat says, nodding his head in appreciation. "Glad to be back, though."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



After coming to terms with the 2018 death of Mac Miller, Thundercat got sober, lost 100 pounds and finished his fourth studio album, *"It Is What It Is."*

WEEKEND: MUSIC

FROM PAGE 30

The September 2018 death of rapper Mac Miller — Thundercat's best friend and close collaborator — has colored almost every day since then. Miller's death at age 26, by accidental overdose, occurred roughly one month before the pair were set to embark on a national tour, which would have featured Thundercat as both opening act and the bassist in Miller's band. The tragedy forced Thundercat to grapple with his own demons involving alcohol abuse, triggering a newfound but hard-fought and shaky sobriety.

Around this same time, he decided to go vegan and lost 100 pounds ("I didn't notice until I saw a picture of myself, and it freaked me out. It's still kind of hard to process.") Shortly thereafter, he experienced the emotional rancor of a breakup. Somewhere in the fog, he found the clarity to finish his fourth studio album, the typically brilliant "It Is What It Is," which cements his unlikely but deserved ascent to the ranks of jazz-funk fusion superstar — roughly 35 years after critics read the genre's last rites.

"When Mac died, I realized I couldn't drink my way through it," Thundercat explains. "I sat with it, let the pain in, and accepted that this would be a roller coaster. I needed to feel every part of it, and I still don't know how to feel. There are moments when I break down about it."

To understand Thundercat, you need to accept his natural duality. In one moment, the 35-year-old bassist/producer/general musical virtuoso can be unflinchingly open, vulnerable, generous and sincere. In the next, he will comically hump one of those stuffed animals where you put in a dollar and try to grab stuffed animals with a giant claw. This is what he briefly does while we wait to bowl, squandering a couple bucks in a vain effort to win an oversized plush Sonic the Hedgehog.

"It took me a while to deal with my struggles with alcohol and the friends I've lost," he continues, as we play air hockey amid the chirping whirs and epileptic lights of the arcade adjacent to the alley's 32 lanes.

"Some days I feel good about it, some days I feel horrible. I spent a lot of time self-medicating, and it served its purpose until it couldn't anymore," he says wistfully. "Sometimes, when I look behind, I see smoke and ashes. I feel like I survived, but in a different form."

He sighs and adds for emphasis. "Sometimes I have a hard time."

The Dionysian equation of "sorrow + excess = great art," has gone out of vogue in the past decade. It's a slightly antiquated notion that usually leads to pretension and maudlin indulgence. Thundercat's genius lies in his ability to both reinvent that frayed calculus and combine it with a hilarious streak of absurdist postmodern irony and fluorescent intergalactic symphonies. The result is something like a one-man synthesis of Frank Zappa and George Duke scoring the soundtrack to a live-action reimagining of "Dragon Ball Z," set in the contemporary San Fernando Valley.

His catalogue includes multiple paeanas to his natively attired cat, Tron, and guest raps from everyone from Kendrick Lamar to Pharrell Williams to Lil B. Thundercat's bass lines formed the sonic bedrock of "To Pimp a Butterfly." Lamar's Grammy-winning generational triumph of an album; he will appear on the next Herbie Hancock album; he reintroduced Michael McDonald and Kenny Loggins to millennials on his last album's underground smash, "Show You the Way." In line with the ever-evolving Thundercat Cinematic Universe, the first single off "It Is What It Is" is a gossamer falsetto funk levitation about moving out of the hood and making ill-advised posts on Instagram, pairing Steve Lacy with Childish Gambino with Steve Arrington — the sequin boogie sorcerer behind Slave, a band whose biggest hits all came before Bruner was born in 1985.

"These older artists are beacons of sound and light, and it's important for me to remind people of the context and understanding that ground the music I'm making," Thundercat says. "In this weird algorithm era, it's important to remind people about jazz and the funk and all the stuff that came before us and remains timeless."

His obligation to tradition can only come from someone acutely aware of their place in a deeper slipstream of funk, jazz, yacht rock and soul. His father crafted gorgeous strobe-light grooves in a late-'70s disco ensemble named Chameleon. Thundercat's older brother, Ronald, is one of the best drummers in the world; his younger brother, Jameel, is a gifted beatmaker who until recently played keys in The Internet. Thundercat's original guru was Reggie Andrews, the Mr. Holland of South Central music education. And Thundercat refined his trademark Richter-wobble backing up Erykah Badu and Snoop Dogg, and as a member of venerable L.A. punk thrashers, Suicidal Tendencies.

It's fitting that he feels perfectly at ease in Pinz, enjoying a sport whose peak popularity came during the Watergate era. "People automatically relax about bowling with fun, but there's something relaxing about it to me. Some people love to get competitive, but there's no pressure to win. I'm only competing with myself," he says, breaking down his love affair with the lanes. "There's a real Zen quality to it; it's similar to music in the sense that you have to be okay with your style and learn to be in tune with yourself."

He removes his sweater, revealing a Mac Miller T-shirt underneath. Knuckles are cracked. It's time to bowl. As a musician, Thundercat is always dazzling, unleashing perfect-pitch wails that sound like tears from heaven splashing on an open-collared white leisure suit; his bass riffs are as chunky and rumbling as King Hippo. But as a bowler, he is solid, workmanlike, straightforward. There is no chimerical spin to his

**'When Mac died,
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I break down about it.'**

Thundercat

On the death of his friend and collaborator Mac Miller



Parker Day

throws, but he has precision aim and cruises through the first half of the game with a series of nines, a spare and a strike.

Bowling's appeal is obvious for someone like Thundercat, who alternates between whimsical joy and profound grief. It's a sport that oscillates between the euphoria and cruelties of life, a sure-thing strike that turns into a 7-10 split. Beneath the sartorial flamboyance and eccentricity, Thundercat retains the unaffected quality of someone who grew up in South Central, who would never go Hollywood — even if Brad Pitt recently came to his show at the Wiltern.

"That was trippy as hell," he says later. "I guess he reached out to my management, but I had no idea and while I was playing, I look over and he's sitting next to Ariana Grande. So I waved."

For now, it's serious business at the bowling alley. Kind of. Thundercat takes a laissez-faire approach to the sport, drifting off and wandering about, breaking to FaceTime his 13-year-old daughter. Pinz is his happy place, a cocoon of sentimentality and nostalgia that reminds him of when he used to come here with his friend, Austin Peralta, the jazz piano prodigy. They used to watch "The Big Lebowski" on loop and always dreamed of starting a bowling team, until Peralta's 2012 death from viral pneumonia aggravated by a combination of alcohol and drugs. He was just 22. Peralta played on Thundercat's 2011 debut, and the duo had been virtually inseparable right up until his last night on earth.

If Thundercat has a superpower, it's in his ability to transmute his intense grief into art. It's a quality he shares with his label boss, close friend and producer, Flying Lotus — who walks into the bowling alley about halfway through our game.

"He's slowly been able to introduce people to who he really is: a maniac who can be very silly but also someone who is super emotional and wears his heart on his sleeve," Flying Lotus says.

"We're both super grateful to have the art to turn to," Lotus continues. "The closing track on 'It Is What It Is' was the first thing we did after we heard the news about Mac. It was painful for us to write the music. It was like, 'Are we really going to try to do this — feeling this way?' But he was like, 'Let's go!' We listened back to it for hours, just crying, but how else could that have manifested into something beautiful?"

Not long after Peralta's death, Thundercat and Miller became close friends based on a shared musical bond and countless other similarities. They'd go on double dates to Pinz and endlessly re-watch "The Big Lebowski."

"We used to argue about who was Walter, who was the Dude, and who was Donny," Thundercat recalls. "But Mac and I eventually realized we were both two Lebowskis."

It's now the 10th frame, and by some cosmic synchronicity, the video screen above is playing the Doobie Brothers' "What a Fool Believes." Thundercat busts out a smooth two-step to Michael McDonald's 10,000-thread-count croon. He nails the spare to finish with a respectable 118 score.

This is where the story was supposed to end. A few days later, Thundercat embarked on what was supposed to be a two-month-long national tour — his first since the death of Miller. The tour was, of course, eventually canceled because of the coronavirus outbreak.

About a week after he returned home, we spoke about the surreal nature of the present moment:

"I've never dealt with anything like this, and I know it's not easy for anyone. I'm just trying to be emotionally supportive to my homes and homiegirls," he says weary via phone.

In a perverse way, Thundercat's new album feels particularly suited for this moment — filled with both celestial, futuristic escapism and plaintive grief, the strength of human resilience and an unshakable sense of frustration. After all, its title is a Zen koan unto itself: "It Is What It Is."

"The name hits a little different now," Thundercat says, laughing.

We talk a little more about his last year and the emotions stirred by yet another false start. The tour was a chance to forget it all and focus on the music, but now he's back home. Even worse, Pinz is closed indefinitely. I ask if there's been anything — any piece of art or record or minor consolation of philosophy — that has gotten him through the deaths, the breakup, the battle for sobriety, the disappointments.

"The Big Lebowski," Thundercat reflexively answers.

"What about it?"

"Strikes and gutters, man. It's all just strikes and gutters."

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS



Tony Allen and Hugh Masekela

Rejoice (World Circuit Records)

"Rejoice," a long-dormant collaboration between legendary Afrobeat drummer Tony Allen and South African horn player Hugh Masekela, is a swirling, restless album that wisely puts their instruments at the center of the action.

Recorded mostly a decade ago in London, it was completed last year at the same studio where it was started under the guidance of producer Nick Gold.

Allen is a Paris-based Nigerian native whose reputation was cemented during his long association with the late Fela Kuti but whose long résumé also includes supergroup The Good, the Bad & the Queen with Damon Albarn, Paul Simonon and Simon Tong. He says "Rejoice" is a "kind of South African-Nigerian swing-jazz stew," a description that is as inviting as it is accurate. The album cover, which emulates the classic style of the Blue Note label, seems to underline the jazz elements.

The 2010 sessions at Livington Studio took place with Allen laying down his drum patterns and Masekela working out the melodic structure and playing his flugelhorn parts separately. The rest of the instruments, including bass, keyboards, percussion and vibraphone, comprise a subtle and empathetic support group. Notable among them are tenor sax player Steve Williamson on three of the eight tracks and Tom Herbert's acoustic bass.

The sound of Allen's drum set is wonderfully clear and detailed and his playing superb, while Masekela, who died in 2018 and was also known for his anti-apartheid advocacy, performs with his usual high-flying lyricism and technical excellence.

Masekela adds vocals to a few tracks, which include a homage to Fela Kuti titled "Never (Lagos Never Gonna Be the Same)," a vignette inspired by Masekela's youth in a Johannesburg suburb, "Robbers, Thugs and Muggers (O'Galajani)," and the scrumptious "Slow Bones," which exudes creative and spiritual freedom.

One of the last tunes, "Obama Shuffle Strut Blues," is a percussive tour de force and tips its cap to the former U.S. president, who hadn't been in office too long when the album was being made.

The release of "Rejoice" is a welcome blessing for listeners and an exquisite example of Allen and Masekela's magnificient talents.

— Pablo Gorondi
Associated Press



Joey Martinez

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real

Naked Garden (Fantasy Records)

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real offer 10 outtakes and five alternative versions of songs that appeared on last year's "Turn Off the News (Build a Garden)" with their latest album, "Naked Garden."

It's not just a record for completists. The alternate versions and outtakes offered here stand on their own merits. But for fans of Nelson, it offers a glimpse into his artistic process.

An acoustic version "Civilized Hell," slowed down here, packs a different kind of punch than the rocked-up version did that was released last



year. There's also another full-band version of the song on "Naked Garden," for those who just can't get enough.

One highlight, the previously unreleased "The Way You Say Goodbye," features Nelson sounding more like Roy Orbison than his dad, Willie Nelson. Hearing his take on the country waltz song is worth the price of admission alone.

There's also some fun banter included in between tracks, making it feel like the listener is there with the band in the studio. Not everything's perfectly presented here, but that's by design.

— Scott Bauer
Associated Press

Dave Simonet

Red Tail (Thirty Tigers)

Dave Simonet does wistful well.

On his first solo project bearing his real name, the Trampled by Turtles frontman delivers eight gently aching songs that sound like their names: "In the Western Wind and the Sunrise," "There's a Lifeline Deep in the Night Sky" and — well, you get the idea.

Simonet's new album, "Red Tail," is the logical successor to "Furnace," a wonderful but underrated album he put out under the name Dead Man Winter in 2017 while sorting through the storm damage of a divorce.

"Red Tail" finds him further along the cathartic path, and yet it still has the pacing of a deep sigh.

On the opener "Revoked," Simonet allows from the start that he's "feeling fine now." But the setting is a folk minuet with lyrics that match the somber tone: "A bracing pond a whip-



poorwill, awake but I'm just standing still, and morning came with shaky nerves, where can we go, when will I learn?"

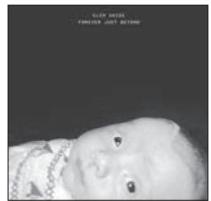
None of that is meant to cast this album as a road map to depression, and despite its emotional heft it doesn't come off as self-absorbed. There's more going on here than that.

All the songs have a poignancy that reflect Simonet's craftsmanship and his penchant for aching lyrics. In a

song called "Pisces, Queen of Hearts," he builds to a gentle crescendo and then sings, "I remember thinking we would meet again, in the space between the starlight and the tree line."

So no, it's probably not dinner music, and it's definitely not party music, but it has more depth than his work with the band for which he's known. And if you're in a certain mood, maybe one that has you gazing out a window on a quiet rainy evening, this might be the vibe you're looking for.

— Scott Stroud
Associated Press



Clem Snide

Forever Just Beyond
(Ramseur/Thirty Tigers)

There have been many iterations of Clem Snide over the years, but by now it's turned into a personal alias for Eef Barzelay. "Forever Just Beyond" shows him and his current ensemble at their most quietly devastating.

Produced by Scott Avett, who also performs and helped write some of the material, the predominantly acoustic album contains soothing melodies and gentle interpretations touching weighty subjects like life, death and transcendence.

Barzelay and Avett are a great creative match with the help of an ac back ing group, and the songs' philosophical musings make for keenly melodic observations on the circumstances of our fleeting lives.

Like Steely Dan, the Clem Snide moniker also is taken from the William S. Burroughs oeuvre and refers to a recurring character who also stars as a private eye. It's an apt analogy for Barzelay's own inquisitiveness.

Album opener "Roger Ebert" centers on some of the movie critic's final words — "It's all an elaborate hoax" — and the passage from this life into whatever comes next. The title track, one of the album's most meticulous, attempts to define the divine as something outside the confines of faith and reason: "God is simply that which lies forever just beyond the limit of what we already seem to know."

"The True Shape Your Heart" is beautifully but heartbreakingly romantic, and here Barzelay sounds halfway between Ron Sexsmith and Nick Cave. "Ballad of Eef Barzelay" reinforces the wastefulness and futility of suicide, while "Emily" provides a tough recipe for changing the world — start with yourself and "be more kind and brave in the face of it all."

Closer "Some Ghost," one of the Avett co-writes, is another atmospheric musical gem with lyrics trying to make sense of the voices trapped in our head and point to a way out.

The Israeli-born, Nashville-based Barzelay describes his past decade as a "rollercoaster of deep despair and amazing opportunities," including divorce, bankruptcy and a fan's generous donation. With "Forever Just Beyond," Barzelay shows that he's made the most of this chance he got.

— Pablo Gorondi
Associated Press

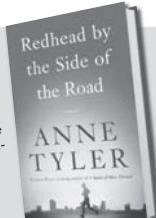
WEEKEND: BOOKS



By HILLEN ITALIE
Associated Press

After more than 20 books, Anne Tyler still finds ways to challenge herself. Her new novel, "Redhead by the Side of the Road," is, of course, set in her longtime home of Baltimore and features the family and romantic entanglements and other narrative touches Tyler fans know well. But the story's main character, a self-employed tech consultant/repairman confronting the fallout of decisions made years before, pretty much came out of nowhere.

"This is the first book I've written where I began with no idea," Tyler, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist known for "The Accidental Tourist," "Morgan's Passing" and "Breathing Lessons," told The Associated Press in a recent email. "I was wracking my brains for something to write about, and a single sentence popped into my



Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Anne Tyler's new novel, "Redhead by the Side of the Road," is either wholly irrelevant or just what we need — or possibly both. Slight and slightly charming, it's like the cherry Jell-O that Mom serves when you're feeling under the weather. Not much of a meal, perhaps, but who could handle more now?

The milquetoast protagonist is Micah Mortimer, "a tall, bony man in his early 40s with not-so-good posture." He lives in a basement apartment in Baltimore, which over the course of more than 20 novels has become Tyler's Yoknapatawpha. Gilded with a patina of quirkiness, Micah is a self-employed computer fix-it guy. Tellingly, he calls himself the Tech Hermit. He repairs elderly folks' PCs,

sometimes by turning them off and turning them back on.

"His routine is etched in stone," Tyler writes. "He rises, runs, eats breakfast and answers a few calls. Monday is trash night. Micah prided himself on his house-keeping."

He may not have a pulse, but he does have a girlfriend. "She was matronly," Tyler writes, "which Micah found kind of a turn-on." That marks the erotic peak of this novel. He and Cass had been together for three years or so, and they had reached the stage where things had more or less solidified: compromises arrived at, incompatibilities adjusted to, minor quirks overlooked. They had it down to a system." Or so Micah assumes. In the first chapter, Cass fears she's about to be evicted from her apartment. When Micah reacts with insufficient sympathy, she breaks up with him.

I have switched dry cleaners with more drama.

Of course, there's also a sweet and somewhat amusing family in this novel, and of course, they have sweet and somewhat amusing rituals involving food. "The table itself was bare," Tyler writes, "except for a portable Ping Pong net that had been stretched across the center." If you've read and adored as many of Tyler's novels as I have, such idiosyncrasies convey all the reassuring warmth of an old hymn.

Micah's four sisters — all lifelong waitresses — pest him to get Cass back, lest he "end up a crusty old bachelor," but he resists their efforts. Still, the minor disruptions to Micah's orderly life are just beginning. A preppy young man named Brink shows up at the door. He's run away from college and his parents. "I don't belong in that family," Brink tells Micah. "I'm a, like, misfit. They're all so ... I'm more like you." Having found some old photos from his mother's

horrors, whether the 2018 shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue or the tragedies along the U.S.-Mexican border:

"I found it easy to 'be' Micah, so to speak, throughout the book, especially in that passage. We all have lone-some moments, after all; it's no stretch to imagine those. But also the events that he's reflecting upon here — the synagogue shooting, the plight of immigrant children — weigh so heavily on my mind these days, as I imagine they do on everyone's, that I felt even Micah would have to be affected by them."

On the book's title, based on a recurring hallucination of Micah's:

"Several times I mistook the same object for another on my morning walk, although you'd think I would have learned after the first time. The experience started me thinking: How many other mistakes, more serious mistakes, do we repeat in the course of our lives? How often do we fail to realize that they were mistakes, even? I thought it would be fun to explore the issue."

On life in Baltimore:

"I guess it's no secret that Baltimore is going through a hard spell. And yet it's such a kindhearted city, paradoxical though that sounds. Just about everyone here, across all classes and cultures, behaves with grace and patience. Watch some trying episode in, say, a supermarket checkout line — a customer taking too long counting coins or a cashier who doesn't know his produce codes. Baltimoreans stand by quietly, or they try to help out if they can. Not even an eye-roll! I think this has an influence on my writing. In such surroundings, how could I possibly invent a mean-spirited character?"

On how Micah would handle social distancing:

"I think he would have handled it the way I have. First I thought, 'Oh, well, never mind; I basically shelter in place anyhow, and I already know about working from home — how you have to be sure and change out of your pajamas.' But then after a few days I thought, 'Oh. Wait a minute. I'm surprised at how often now I feel the need to step out on my front stoop and start a conversation with a passing neighbor.'

On the book, completed well before the pandemic, might read now:

"I haven't read the book since the virus began. A friend asked recently, though, how I'd known to write pages 94-95, so I checked to see what she meant. Lo and behold, there was Micah on his early-morning run fantasizing, briefly, that the empty streets were due to some global disaster and he was the last person left alive. Then he comes upon two women talking up a storm together, and he's extremely pleased to see them. I relate to that scene now much more than when I wrote it."

On writing while sheltering in place:

"For the first few days, I seemed to keep writing the same three pages over and over again. I just had a general feeling of distractiveness. Eventually, though, I did sink back into my work. I happened to be writing about an Easter dinner with a lot of people attending, some of them behaving a bit snarkily with each other. I thought, 'Oh, now I remember why I write. I write because it makes me happy.'

As for whether the virus will turn up in my next book: Well, generally I don't think current events make for very good literature. They have to mellow for a while. We need a little distance to see them for what they are."

Familiar, but also different

Anne Tyler discusses new book, Baltimore and social distance

Diana Walker

head: 'You have to wonder what goes through the mind of a man like _____.' (I didn't have a name for him yet.) I was baffled. Why should I have to wonder? I thought, and then up popped the next sentence: 'He lives alone; he keeps to himself ...'

"The rest of the book was up to me, but at least I was on my way."

The computer man's name is Micah Mortimer. He lives alone and wonders if he's meant to be that way as he alienates his current girlfriend and unexpectedly reconnects with the woman he loved — and drove away — back in college. Tyler tries to minimize politics and topical references in her books, but is quite specific about locations, placing Micah in north Baltimore, in a three-story home near York Road, with an "incongruous front porch" and a "splintery front porch swing that nobody ever sits in."

During her recent AP interview, the 78-year-old Tyler discussed the mind of Micah, the book's tricky title, Baltimore and her life during the coronavirus outbreak.

On Micah, whom she describes in one passage as "narrow and limited" but still aware of the world's

college years, Brink is convinced that Micah must be his real father. Alas, the calendar won't support that conclusion.

Tyler spins a small story about a man perplexed by the tepid state of his life. "He had no one," he realizes. "His entire life ran in a rut." But maybe, he thinks, he just doesn't want all the "fuss and bother" of being close to someone.

There is nothing necessarily objectionable about a novel focused on "such a narrow and limited man," as Tyler calls Micah. Writers as diverse as Sinclair Lewis and Anita Brookner have found profound comedy and pathos in the lives of apparently dull people. But in this case, the mold growing on Micah's airless character seems to have spread to the narration itself.

Tyler's best novels are so wonderful that they've tended to eclipse her short stories, but that would have been a more effective form for "Redhead by the Side of the Road."

— Ron Charles/The Washington Post

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

"Bad Boys for Life": It's been a minute since we last heard from Martin Lawrence and Will Smith's wisecracking Miami detectives Marcus and Mike. (Want to feel old? "Bad Boys II" came out 17 years ago.) But, thanks to directors Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah, the '90s nostalgia keeps on coming.

In the film, Mike (Smith) is injured by a family seeking revenge for the detective's role in a drug lord's prison sentence. He seeks help from his partner, Marcus (Lawrence), and an elite team called AMMO to track down and stop the cartel.

This third installment of the franchise has plenty of love for the genre and even more love for its characters.

"El Arbi and Fallah have done seemingly the impossible. They've taken over an action franchise 17 years after the last installment and made a film that's a delightfully dizzying love letter to action filmmaking of yore, while respectfully preserving the franchise's best elements," wrote Tribune News Service critic Katie Walsh in her review.

Also available on DVD:

"The Turning": Eerie events haunt a nanny (Mackenzie Davis) who's taking care of two orphans in an East Coast Gothic mansion.

"Fatal Attraction": The 1987 hit thriller starring Michael Douglas and Glenn Close is being rereleased on Blu-ray with a remastering under the supervision of director Adrian Lyne.

"The Gentlemen": An expat in London (Matthew McConaughey) faces layers of schemes while attempting to sell off his weed business.

"Ip Man 4: The Finale": The Kung Fu master Ip Man (Donnie Yen) heads to the United States as his student opens up a martial arts school and faces discrimination from the community. In Cantonese, English and Mandarin.

"King Creole": The 1958 film starring Elvis Presley as a young man supporting his family as a club singer after joining a gang is being released on Blu-ray.

"The Last Full Measure": Airman William H. Pitsenbarger (Jeremy Irvine) is awarded the country's highest military honor posthumously.

"Looking for Alaska": Based on the John Green novel of the same name, the Hulu miniseries follows boarding school student Miles (Charlie Plummer), whose love story with Alaska (Kristine Froseth) results in tragedy.

"Party Hard, Die Young": A trip to a techno party in Croatia turns deadly for a group of friends celebrating their graduation. Stars Marlon Boes, Markus Freistatter and Michael Glantschnig. In German.

"Sea Fever": A trapped-at-sea crew attempts to ward off a deadly parasite. Stars Connie Nielsen, Hermoine Corfield and Dougray Scott.

"To Catch a Thief": The Alfred Hitchcock classic is being rereleased on Blu-ray for its 65th anniversary.

— Katie Foran-McHale/TNS

Q&A



HBO/AP

Issa Rae, left, and Yvonne Orji appear in a scene from the fourth season premiere episode of "Insecure."

Hey, Issa Rae

The creator of HBO's 'Insecure' discusses fourth season details, reasons for delays

BY MESFIN FEKADU
Associated Press

The HBO hit "Insecure" typically airs during the summer, but series creator Issa Rae has been moving like the Energizer Bunny, with a schedule so booked and busy that the show's return had to be delayed. But for good reason.

She filmed two movies ("The Photograph," "The Lovebirds"). She executive produced and appeared in HBO's "A Black Lady Sketch Show." The actress who breaks out in raps to cope with life on "Insecure" launched her own record label. And Rae is writing, producing and starring in a new movie called "Perfect Strangers" and also producing another HBO series, "Rap (expletive)," about a female rap group trying to find a breakthrough.

"I was just relieved to not be doing the show and to be working on other things so much so that I was finally grateful to come back when I was done with those projects," Rae, 35, said of "Insecure," which returned to HBO on April 12. "I love this show. I love the people on it. I love creating it and making it. It just made me more appreciative of what we were doing."

"Insecure" finds Rae's character, Issa Dee, on a search to find herself — professionally and personally. The show also stars Yvonne Orji (Molly), Jay Ellis (Lawrence), Amanda Seales (Tiffany) and Natasha Rothwell (Kelli), who also writes and produces the show.

Rae spoke recently about her Emmy-nominated series and the show within the show, which this season is a docuseries on a missing black woman.

AP: What can we expect from season four?

Rae: This season is really about whether the people in your life are there for a reason, or a season. It really is about that transitional period when you go from your 20s and you're kind of figuring out who you are, to your 30s when you really know who you are. You know what you're going to tolerate and what you're not going to tolerate and who you want around you to continue that journey.

This season specifically, there's a lot of relationships mirrored to my own personal friendships and my own relationships dealing with the same kind of transitions and the questions.

It was funny seeing Porsha Williams from "Real Housewives of Atlanta" and Masika Kalysya from "Love and Hip-Hop" on the show. Did they have to audition?

Masika auditioned. That was just a surprise of going through the audition tape and being like, "Oh good, she's good. It's great." And just being like, "OK, cast her."

For a show within a show, those are always very specific and you have a cast in mind, and then we just approach them and they're down.

It's nice seeing veteran black actors in that show within a show. (It also includes Terri J. Vaughn and Carl Anthony Payne.)

It's a way to honor our legends. It's so fulfilling to be able to work with them — to have them be a part of our cultural moment.



Even the storyline is interesting.

It's so ridiculous. That even came about from our random obsession with true crime podcasts and true crime documentaries and being like, "There's never black people." Nobody would dedicate a whole podcast or documentaries to missing black people. Nobody does a "To Live and Die in L.A." if the girl is black. We were just trying to document that.

How have you been able to balance all of your projects?

I'm not going to lie — I'm toppling plates over here. I have not been great at balancing, but the people that I work with have been amazing. This quarantine, I would have been on a three-week press tour for "Insecure" and "Lovebirds" while having to

meet a deadline to rewrite a movie and write a pilot. I don't know how I was going to do that. I wasn't going to do that. I was going to kill myself. Now to be able to have this forced time to be able to dedicate to creating and writing has been so fulfilling. Obviously these circumstances are terrible, but it's really just allowed me to put a pause on so much and to focus on what I love to do: — the parts that I like to do. I actually don't like traveling for the press, really. I don't like the promotional stuff for the most part. It's stressful. It takes a lot of time. You forget, "Oh this is what I love to do. I'm a writer."

— Mesfin Fekadu/TNS

WEEKEND: FAMILY

COVID camp conundrum

Uncertain summer plans leave parents, kids dangling

BY LEANNE ITALIE

Associated Press

For 17-year-old Morgan Carney, missing her seventh summer at overnight camp in the Ozarks would be worse than what she's feeling now in isolation without her school friends and usual slate of activities.

"She says she can't even think about not going to camp this summer or she'll be depressed," said her mother, Amy Carney. "Her best friends in life are her camp friends."

So far, so good for the Phoenix teen. Her camp in Branson, Mo., has made no plans to cancel. But other kids looking forward to new or beloved summer programs haven't been so lucky.

Some camps have already notified families they won't open due to the coronavirus crisis. Most, however, are in wait-and-see mode.

"Right now it's such a dynamic situation," said Tom Rosenberg, president and CEO of the American Camp Association. "The camps themselves are trying to be adaptable and flexible as more information becomes available."

With the start of the season approaching, many camps are monitoring the pandemic's progress, and crunching the numbers on potential mass refunds. Some parents have held off putting money down, with camps extending deadlines for enrollment.

Virginia is the only state with a stay-at-home edict that stretches into June. But regardless of whether such orders continue, are imposed anew or lifted, will parents feel comfortable that the coronavirus threat has lessened enough to make camp safe?

Thomas Bradbury in Augusta, Maine, has two girls, ages 8 and 12. He has already paid for camp but has no idea how summer will play out.

"I feel a mix of unease and irresponsibility sending them to any summer camp," he said. "Prevention is better than cure, and I want to do my bit to help prevent this virus spreading any more than it needs to."

Most camps have long dealt with disease outbreaks and critters like lice. Screening and health protocols exist. But Tracey Gaslin's phone hasn't stopped ringing in recent days. She's stopped executive director of the Association of Camp Nursing, which advises nurses and camp directors.

"We're encouraging camps to work on Plan A, with the hope of having camp, but you also need to be working on Plan B and Plan C," she said. "It could be virtual camping. It could be camping with limited numbers. Who knows?"

A new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report shows that fever, cough and shortness of breath were the most common symptoms of the virus in kids, but occur less often than in adults.



JCC ASSOCIATION/AP

A camper tries a wooden climbing wall at JCC Abrams Camps in East Windsor Township, N.J. This year's summer camps face uncertainty.

Young people, along with others, can be silent carriers.

More than 22 camps have plans to pivot to "online camp" this summer, including some for kids with special health needs. Other camps are looking at limiting field trips and visitors' days, or pushing back start dates.

Day camps reliant on mass bus-ing have added worry of bans on crowded buses.

The thought of no camp is a dark one for parents already frazzled by taking on home school and keeping kids entertained during lockdown. The prospect is just as bleak for camp directors.

"It's an existential threat to not be able to operate," Rosenberg said. "What we do know is, kids need camp more than ever."

According to industry estimates, the U.S. has more than 14,000 year-round and summer camps serving 20 million campers annually.

Geoff Blanck owns and operates the Forest Lake Camps in New York's Adirondacks region, serving 150 to 175 campers at a time. He's proceeding with preparations for this season, scheduled to start June 28.

His staff of 70 is hired, the water will be turned on soon and cleanup has begun. Seven weeks costs \$8,300.

"We're telling families, if we're not able to run camp because of COVID-19, you'll get a 100% refund. We know it will be devastating for us financially if we're not able to run, but morally it's simply the right thing to do," Blanck said. "This is our extended family."

For just one family has canceled, with a promise to return next year.

One of the most difficult things has been families delaying enrollment, Blanck said. Will there be a rush come June, or will the wind up

running a smaller program?

Todd Rothman, who owns Deerkill Day Camp in New York's Rockland County, is also planning as if he'll open, possibly with a delayed start. He usually opens June 29, serving about 800 campers through the summer.

If he can't run buses, he may ask families to drive their children to and from camp. Some campers travel up to 45 minutes each way.

"We'd probably lose half to three-quarters of our families if they have to drive," Rothman said.

Rothman has had only two families cancel. They were refunded their balances, and their \$500 deposits per child were rolled over to next year.

Doron Krakow, president and CEO of the JCC Association of North America, said about 150 day camps and 25 overnight camps in the U.S. and Canada are operated by Jewish community centers that fall under his nonprofit's umbrella. Between them, the camps serve about 100,000 young people every summer and are a big part of the community centers' annual income.

In the South, summer camp usually starts at the end of May. That means staff would be headed to camp in a few short weeks for orientation.

"There's genuine concern about how safe and responsible" that would be, Krakow said.

Gaslin, meanwhile, is putting her trust in public health officials and beefed-up attention to hand-washing and other preventive measures. She's been running webinars on screening protocols for when kids hop on buses and when they check in at camp. That includes temperature checks and questions about exposure.

"All we can do is mitigate risk," she said.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



Tiptoeing around the Class of COVID-19

Mom! We're out of avocados!" my 22-year-old daughter, Anna, bellowed. "And where are the goat cheese crumbles?"

People all over the globe are covering their faces and hands before entering grocery stores to buy life-sustaining food staples for their families sheltering at home, only to find them sparsely stocked. But in Anna's world, being out of avocados is an emergency.

A month ago, I picked Anna up from Syracuse University, where she is a senior fashion design major, because the school had shut down due to the coronavirus crisis. I was looking forward to the five-hour drive home with her, catching up and joking around.

But she was in a mood. I listened to my audiobook. She texted friends, ate trail mix and slept.

At home, the rest of the family and I tiptoed around Anna and her mood. Previous history had taught us that normally playful, entertaining, vivacious and talented Anna could turn into a selfish, entitled, narcissistic prima donna at a moment's notice. As a kid, she had milked her victimhood as the middle child, so we knew the global pandemic had given her a new excuse for self-pity.

Admittedly, she was getting daily emails from her school containing very bad news, so we kept our distance.

"My Senior Fashion Show was canceled! I've been working on my collection for two years! I won't have photos for my portfolio!" she wailed. "My friends had so many fun things planned for our senior spring! Now we'll never see each other again!" she moaned. "Graduation is postponed! It won't be the same! I wanted a party!" she barked. "Fashion industry sales are predicted to drop 30%! Internships and jobs openings are being canceled! What am I gonna do?" she bellyached. "Who ate my turmeric quinoa bowl! You know gluten gives me inflammation! And how many times do I have to ask — can someone please buy oat milk? Ugh!" she blared.

When we weren't hiding, we cautiously teased Anna, nicknaming her "Pandanna" to signal that our otherwise lovable family member was temporarily under the influence of an inflated sense of importance during the pandemic.

Our tiptoeing continued for three weeks while we sheltered at home, until the tension reached its peak. While carrying laundry upstairs, I found Anna and her sister, Lilly, locked in a circular argument. Something about "never want to hang out" and "always on your phone" and "literally a thousand times" and "soselfish" and a lot of that adjective that rhymes with "itchy."

"Lilly, Anna is under a lot of pressure and needs her space. Anna, even though you are stressed about graduation and your future, it doesn't give you the right to be [rhymes with "itchy"] to your family," I said.

The next day, Anna was in the kitchen making a salad for our family dinner. This rare act — preparing food for more than just herself — showed that she was making an effort to be nice. As the rest of the family siddled past each other between the sink, refrigerator and cabinets to set the table, Anna sliced radishes and cucumbers in silence.

Then I realized that she was crying.

"What is it, honey?" I asked, reaching for her arms.

Fat, glossy tears tumbled down Anna's cheeks. "It all happened so fast. If I had known what I was going to miss, I would have made the best of my senior year before the virus outbreak. But it's too late; we're never going back to school. I might not find a job. It's all so hard to accept."

I hugged my daughter, said it would be OK, and told her she would have to use her unique imagination to create alternative experiences.

"Pandanna" wasn't throwing another selfish tantrum. This was Anna, overwhelmed with the genuine sense of loss that has been earned by every 2020 graduate — the Class of COVID-19. Certainly, these young men and women are talented enough, resourceful enough and strong enough to overcome this challenge. But there's no tiptoeing around it — they've earned the right to cry.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at themeatandpotatoesofflife.com.

Email: themeatandpotatoesofflife@gmail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

DOUBLE TALK

BY JIM PEREDO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Jim Peredo of Lakewood, Wash., is a stay-at-home dad and former communications engineer in the Air Force. He got into crossword by way of genealogy — posting puzzles online whose answers are geographic coordinates. (Search for “Team Peredox” for examples.) Jim counts himself as a Chamberlain: Both his parents are Guamanian, although he himself has lived in Guam for only a year. This is his ninth puzzle for The Times and his second Sunday. — W.S.

CROSS

- 1 Orchestra heavyweights
- 6 Mushroom in ramen
- 11 When tripped, a comment of annoyance
- 14 “Oh, my!”
- 18 It has a very big bed
- 19 One of a pair of explorers on the Missouri state quarter
- 20 Spring feature
- 21 Golden-rule word
- 22 Run-on sentence?
- 25 _____-by-date
- 26 Common female middle name
- 27 Wax theatrical
- 28 Sharply dressed, showpiece?
- 30 Boring events
- 32 Bit of conniving
- 34 Five-letter word capital that locals spell as two words
- 35 Tempe neighbor
- 36 Passing comment?
- 38 Riding the waves
- 41 Something a bib catches
- 43 Busy Bee, for short
- 44 Single quote?
- 50 Doesn't touch
- 55 Head to bed
- 56 Surreal finale?

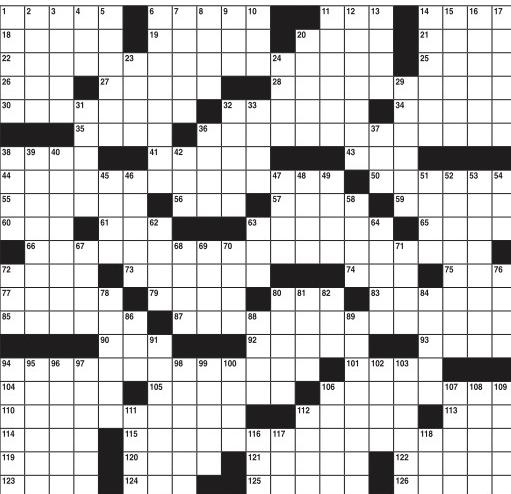
BYLINE

BY JIM PEREDO / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

- 57 Big name in student grants
- 59 Order to attack
- 60 “On the Road” protagonist
- 61 Weapon associated with the film quote “Here's Johnny!”
- 63 Sack cloth
- 65 Hats, slangily
- 66 Just saying?
- 72 Roddenberry, first TV writer on the Hollywood Walk of Fame
- 73 Ancient Greek poet sometimes called the Tenth Muse
- 74 Smear
- 75 Preschooler
- 77 Nickname for Baseball Hall-of-Famer Ernie Banks
- 79 When tripped, “etc.”
- 80 Educational TV spot, for short
- 83 Square dance move
- 85 Fireplace item
- 87 Stock phrase?
- 90 Not commercial: Abbe
- 92 Briskly
- 93 Bring in
- 94 Self expression?
- 101 Trade jabs
- 104 Sports venue
- 105 “Outta luck!”
- 106 Magical powder
- 110 Prepped for surgery
- 112 Children's-song refrain
- 113 Uma Thurman's role in “Pulp Fiction”
- 114 Yonder, in dialect
- 115 Old saw?
- 119 Anger
- 120 Spew anger
- 121 Mitchell, creator of the Tony-winning musical “Hedwig”
- 122 Handle
- 123 “What are the _____?”
- 124 Del sandwich, hold the vowels
- 125 Like stereotypical Seattle weather
- 126 Symbol of the National Audubon Society
- 128 Puts on . . . or things put on
- 139 Ugly ones sometimes come out in December
- 40 Nash at noon, say
- 42 Diamond stat
- 45 Second-most-common Vietnamese surname
- 46 Home of Wichita Falls
- 47 Magnum —
- 48 Game-ball material
- 49 The seas got her tongue, you might say
- 51 Where hills pile up
- 52 Lower-extremity affliction
- 53 Secret target
- 54 Capt.'s assistant, maybe
- 58 Milk: Fr.
- 62 Where the meaning of life was sold in 2000 for \$3.26
- 63 Part of a job application
- 17 “Stop right there!”
- 20 Adorable one
- 23 _____ Research Center
- 24 Org. tracking workplace accidents
- 29 English setting for a series of Impressionist paintings by Monet
- 31 Neighbor of an Emirati
- 32 Young weaned pig
- 33 Monk's digs
- 36 Word with tippy or twinkle
- 37 “2001: A Space Odyssey” computer
- 38 Puts on . . . or things put on
- 39 Ugly ones sometimes come out in December
- 40 Nash at noon, say
- 42 Diamond stat
- 45 Second-most-common Vietnamese surname
- 46 Home of Wichita Falls
- 47 Magnum —
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- 63 Part of a job application

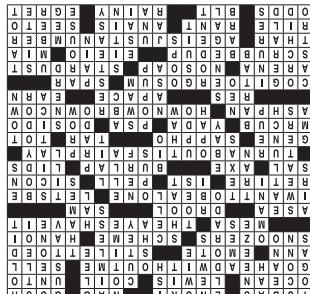
DOWN

- 1 Coverings on ancient Roman statue
- 2 Women's-horseball powerhouse, for short
- 3 Gas-relieving brand
- 4 “What a relief!”
- 5 “Down-choo!”
- 6 Poem about a mythical quest
- 7 Scurries near streams
- 8 Minor cut, say
- 9 Makeup holder
- 10 Suffix with Black or brack
- 11 “Can't deal with that right now!”
- 12 Lacking focus
- 13 Unbridled joy
- 14 Composer Mahler
- 15 Low tie
- 16 Canonized fifth-century pope called “the Great”
- 17 “Old _____ Road,” longest-running No. 1 single in Billboard history (19 weeks)
- 78 You open one at a pub
- 80 Kind of book or ad
- 81 Didn't just float
- 82 Home of 72-Down
- 84 Mortimer _____ dummy of old radio and TV
- 86 Newcomer, informally
- 72 “Today” rival, for short
- 64 European museum whose name means “meadow”
- 67 Sign on agave
- 68 Another name for the moonfish
- 69 Common wedding hairstyle
- 70 Undergo _____ rapprochement
- 71 Stem's opposite
- 76 “Old _____ Road,” longest-running No. 1 single in Billboard history (19 weeks)
- 78 You open one at a pub
- 80 Kind of book or ad
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- 82 Home of 72-Down
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- 72 “Today” rival, for short
- 64 European museum whose name means “meadow”
- 67 Sign on agave
- 68 Another name for the moonfish
- 69 Common wedding hairstyle
- 70 Undergo _____ rapprochement
- 71 Stem's opposite



- 79 Not worry
- 91 Country whose most widely spoken language is Wolof
- 94 Democratic politician Julian
- 95 Flora for a corsage
- 96 First name in the 1970s White House
- 97 Gets used to)
- 98 Gopher, e.g.
- 99 Fighter pilot's wear
- 100 [head slap]
- 102 Masochist's pleasure
- 103 Generate, as suspicion
- 106 Peaceful protest
- 107 Brown shade
- 108 Evening hour in Spain
- 109 Cartomancer's deck
- 111 Pointed remark
- 112 Actor Morales
- 116 Rattle
- 117 _____ voce poco fa’ (Rossini’s aria)
- 118 One of the March sisters

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



GUNSTON STREET



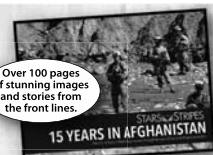
“Gunston Street” is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com, and visit gunstonstreet.com.

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FACES

Celebs 'All In'

Athletes, entertainers donating prizes for raffle to help needy

By TOM CANAVAN
Associated Press

With factories closed, tens of millions out of work and a recession looming because of the coronavirus pandemic, athletes, teams, entertainers and business leaders are donating prized possessions in response to a challenge to feed families suddenly in need.

The "All In Challenge" was started by Philadelphia 76ers player Michael Rubin on Tuesday, and some of the biggest names in sports and entertainment have answered the call.

After 24 hours, there was already an impressive roster of Athletes offering prizes.

They include quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton and Eli Manning; musicians Justin Bieber; Meek Mill and Robin Thicke; actors Robert De Niro, Leonardo DiCaprio, Kevin Hart and Matt Damon; McConaughey; director Martin Scorsese; TV hosts Ellen DeGeneres and Ryan Seacrest; TikTok stars Charli and Dixie D'Amelio; basketball Hall of Famer Magic Johnson; Chicago Cubs infielder Anthony Rizzo and retired baseball star Alex Rodriguez; and several NFL, NHL and NBA teams.

This list is growing, said Rubin, who came up with the idea two weeks ago.

"I had two goals from the second this popped in my mind," Rubin told The Associated Press on Wednesday. "The first was to feed as many people possible. It was such an important cause and need. The second thing was, I love a good come together ... to have every athlete and actor come together, the sports and entertainment worlds coming together. To me, that is incredibly special."

Rubin said all the money raised will go directly to one of four organizations that feed the hungry: Feeding America, Meals On Wheels, World Central Kitchen and No Kid Hungry.

A billionaire who made his money with an e-commerce company he started in 2011, Rubin has donated what might be the biggest prize. The winner of a digital raffle will receive a Super Bowl experience with 20 friends, along with tickets to the NBA Finals, Stanley Cup Final, World Series, Masters, Final Four, tennis' U.S. Open, the Daytona 500 and the Olympic opening ceremonies.

Entries for Rubin's prize can be purchased in amounts of \$10, \$25, \$50 and \$100. The winning ticket will be selected randomly by computer.

Other prizes are being auctioned.

Those who answered the challenge were required to post a video about their donation and explain why they chose their prize.

Rubin said donations topped \$4 million by midday Wednesday. His goal is to collect donations in the tens of millions of dollars, and his dream objective is \$100 million.

Bradley, who left New England to sign with Tampa Bay after winning six Super Bowls with the Patriots, offered tickets to the Buccaneers' home opener, his



TONY AVELAR/AP

Peyton Manning, left, tees off Feb. 7 as his brother Eli Manning, right, stands nearby during a golf tournament in Pebble Beach, Calif. Peyton Manning plans to play a round of golf and have dinner with an All In Challenge raffle winner. His recently retired brother, Eli, offered a Corvette to the raffle.

game jersey and shoes, and dinner with him. That package is in the auction with the opening bid at \$50,000.

Peyton Manning plans to play a round of golf with the winner and two guests, and then go to a restaurant for dinner with the winner and 10 guests. His recently retired brother, Eli, offered the Corvette he received as the MVP of the New York Giants' Super Bowl win over the Patriots in February 2012.

Meek Mill is auctioning his 2018 Rolls-Royce Phantom. Bidding starts at \$200,000.

Mill was the person Rubin ran

his idea past and his response was, "I'm in."

Rubin asked him if he was serious.

"He said: 'I don't need the car. I need to do what helps people eat,'" said Rubin, whose job brings him in contact with people in the sports and entertainment industries on a daily basis.

Hart is offering a speaking role in his next movie. DeGeneres and Seacrest plan to have their winners as co-hosts on their shows.

Longhorns' superfan McCoahey is offering a sideline experience at a University of Texas football game.

Rachael Ray still cooking up contributions from her home

By KELLI KENNEDY
Associated Press

Rachael Ray had big plans for the quarantine break at her home in upstate New York. She envisioned "Renaissance time," rereading the classics, resuming her Danish lessons and studying Italian.

"I was going to get more serious about my painting. I had all these lofty goals ... and none of that's happening," the popular daytime talk show host told The Associated Press in a phone interview.

"We have never worked this hard in our entire lives," said Ray, who is taping "#STAYHOME With Rachael" two days a week from her home.

Her husband, John Cusimano, is now the cameraman, producer, cocktail maker and musical guest. Their beloved pit bull Isaboo accounts for the entire studio audience, she jokes.

She wears sweat and no makeup, cooking low-budget meals based around pantry staples like chickpeas and pasta, offering a refreshing peek into her kitchen — she misplaces the garlic sometimes — and a comforting smile.

"This is a weird time. I can't say there's a silver lining ... but there are found moments every day," she said at the start of the first at-home show.

She recently announced that her organization will donate \$4 million to several charities including food banks and relief

funds for laid off restaurant workers, saying she wanted to "help people more than just, 'hey, here's three things you can do with canned tuna!'"

Half the money will go to animal rescue. The animal lover says "a lot of the shelters can't afford to keep going; there're no workers. Animals are in crisis."

"The more you earn in life, the more you owe in service and the more you owe to your community," said Ray. "It is our absolute responsibility to take care of each other."

That's the answer she gives when asked why she's donating so much — and also that she's afraid of her mother.

No, she's not afraid that she might contract the virus, she's "absolutely scared to death" of the 85-year-old tough Sicilian who lives across the street.

"I'm scared because she's tough," Ray said. "She wants a daily update of what you're doing to help the world. In detail."

Ray grew up cleaning shrimp and helping out in her mother's restaurant kitchen. They spent holidays alongside police and firefighters feeding hungry families. Their family celebrated the following day.

"Every holiday was like that. You had to be of service."

In rare down moments, Ray catches up with friends by phone and cooks Moroccan couscous in bone stock for her dog, garnishing it with carrot tops, mint and



RACHAEL RAY SHOW/AP

Rachael Ray cooks in her home kitchen in upstate New York. Ray is taping "#STAYHOME With Rachael" two days a week from her home.

parsley. Her husband plays a mini banjo concert for Isaboo a few times a day.

"It feels so good to get on the phone and kibitz and share," she said. "I just like how much we're using the old-fashioned telephone."

Tower of Power's Castillo suggests 6 hidden gems

Since cutting its first record 50 years ago, Tower of Power has released such classic cuts as "You're Still a Young Man," "So Very Hard to Go," "Don't Change Horses (In the Middle of a Stream)" and "What Is Hip?" Yet the famed Oakland, Calif., soul-funk act also has many hidden gems.

We asked Tower of Power bandleader Emilio Castillo to name some of his favorite lesser-known tunes from the band's songbook. Here are his picks and comments:

"Of the Earth" (from "Bump City," 1972)

"I just love the vibe, the vocals, and the message of this tune!"

"Both Sorry Over Nothin'" (from "Tower of Power," 1973)

"To me, this song has the Memphis sound that we always loved with an Oakland bumb to it to ride out."

"Just When We Start Makin' It" (from "Back to Oakland," 1974)

"To this day, still one of my most favorite ballads Tower ever did."

"I Believe In Myself" (from "Urban Re-newal," 1975)

"A great positive message, groovin' rhythm track and soulful vocal."

"It's So Nice" (from "Ain't Nothin' Stoppin' Us Now," 1976)

"Vocally one of my faves. Good song to cruise in your car to on summer night."

"You Can't Fall Up (You Just Fall Down)" (from "Monster on a Leash," 1991)

"I just love the crafty lyrics ... and the horn arrangement is world-class."

— The Mercury News

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Arrest made in theft of Arboretum bronze gates

WA SEATTLE — Seattle police on Monday arrested a 47-year-old man who is allegedly behind the theft of two ornamental bronze gates that stood since the 1970s at the entrance to the Washington State Arboretum.

The gates, which were commissioned in 1971 and designed by renowned sculptor George Tsutakawa, were reported stolen March 19 after gardeners discovered the gates missing and bolt cutters on the ground. Two people tried to sell the gates to a recycling center on March 20, but the business refused to buy them, according to police.

Police questioned a man who said he drove the suspect to the recycling center and later dropped him off at a homeless encampment, according to the probable cause statement. Detectives found remnants of one gate under a box truck in the encampment, the statement says. Police have also located the second gate, which was largely intact.

Woman gives stimulus check to food pantry

MS BAY ST. LOUIS — A woman donated the \$1,200 relief check she received from the federal government to a Mississippi food pantry amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Sheron Lambert gave the one-time stimulus payment to the Hancock County Food Pantry, WLXO-TV reported Tuesday. The checks are part of the \$2.2 trillion economic recovery bill that will give \$1,200 to individuals and \$2,400 to married couples. Parents are also set to receive an additional \$500 per child.

Lambert said she doesn't need the money and gifted it to the pantry to help feed hungry people in the county. "That's what we all need to do," she said. "Open our hearts first."

Suit: Overturned bounce house trapped kids

NM SANTA FE — A Santa Fe woman is suing Meow Wolf after she says her children were injured when wind overturned the arts and entertainment company's rented bounce house.

The Santa Fe New Mexican reported that attorneys for Anita Vargas didn't say in court documents how the children were hurt at the 2018 block party but alleged that the children were trapped underneath the bounce house.

The case was filed in state district court this week.

After the episode, Vargas posted a picture on Facebook of her son, showing his bruised and bloody face.

Amazing Jumps LLC, the Albuquerque business that owned the bounce house, also is named as a defendant in the lawsuit. The company declined to comment on the pending litigation Monday.

A spokesperson for Meow Wolf also didn't respond to emails.



LYNN SLADKY/AP

Home workout not a stretch

People work out on their balcony in a high-rise during the coronavirus pandemic Tuesday in Miami. People who have been cooped up inside as their companies mandate work-at-home policies and have seen their fitness centers shut down are getting creative with their workouts.

Ice on expressway leads to 50-vehicle pileup

IL CHICAGO — Portions of a Chicago expressway left icy by a wintry blast that brought overnight snowfall led to a pileup involving dozens of vehicles early Wednesday, sending 14 people to hospitals, officials said.

About 50 vehicles were involved in the 5 a.m. pileup along the Kennedy Expressway, the Chicago Fire Department said. The crash prompted Illinois State Police to temporarily close all of the expressway's southbound lanes near Chicago's North Avenue, and multiple northbound lanes were closed.

Police: Highway closed after cows fell off truck

FL DADE CITY — Interstate 75 in Florida was shut down for about two hours after six cows, three dead and three injured, were found along the highway, authorities said.

Troopers responded just before 11 a.m. Tuesday to a call of several cows near the north and southbound lanes of I-75, just north of Tampa, according to a Florida Highway Patrol news release. The Pasco County Sheriff's Office and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission also responded.

The cows appear to have fallen

THE CENSUS

\$18M

The amount Colorado regulators on Monday fined an Occidental Petroleum Corp. subsidiary for a fatal 2017 house explosion linked to a severed oil and gas well flowline. The fine for Kerr-McGee Corp. was the largest ever levied by

the state against an energy company, The Denver Post reported. Federal investigators said the explosion in Firestone happened after lines then owned by Anadarko Petroleum likely were severed during the home's construction. Kerr-McGee was a subsidiary of Anadarko Petroleum, which was later purchased by Occidental. The blast killed Mark Martinez and Joey Irwin. Erin Martinez, Mark Martinez' wife and Irwin's sister, was badly burned.

from an unknown passing truck, investigators said. Officials didn't immediately say what would happen to the injured cows.

Man charged in theft of dump truck, standoff

AZ FLAGSTAFF — A Flagstaff man is facing multiple charges after stealing a dump truck and then barricading himself inside the vehicle, authorities said.

Coconino County Sheriff's officials said Tyler Littlefield, 27, has been booked into jail on suspicion of theft, criminal damage and resisting arrest. Littlefield is accused of stealing the dump truck from a Flagstaff landscape company last Saturday.

Authorities say he then drove it to Grey Mountain, where he stole items from a convenience store.

Littlefield then drove the ve-

hicle back to Flagstaff and was seen driving erratically and causing damage to property, authorities said.

Sheriff's deputies were called when the dump truck got stuck in the mud. Littlefield barricaded inside for about an hour and then was taken into custody.

Supervisor accused of hitting officer with car

GA ATLANTA — An Atlanta police supervisor hit a fellow officer with her car while he was directing traffic and then bit him, authorities said.

Lt. Sharonne Annette Steed was charged last Friday with obstruction, aggravated assault, battery and violation of oath by a public officer. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported. Steed turned herself in Tuesday.

Atlanta police spokesman Car-

los Campos said Steed was trying to go to the bank when she ignored orders from Officer Joel Paul Curtis Richardson, who was working an off-duty job assisting with traffic.

Richardson tried to remove Steed from the car after she hit him, but she bit him on the hand, Campos said.

Authorities help replace girl's alpaca on Easter

OH PATRIOT — A young girl who lost her pet alpaca after the animal was killed during a drive-by shooting in Ohio was gifted another one from local authorities.

Josie Blazer, 5, of Patriot, was surprised to find a 6-month-old alpaca Easter morning, the Gallop Daily Tribune reported Monday. The alpaca that died had been given to Josie as a present following her battle with cancer.

Four Season Veterinary Clinic found a replacement alpaca for Josie, and the Gallia County Sheriff's Office delivered the pet.

The sheriff's office had responded to a call on April 7. A pickup truck had reportedly stopped along a road, and someone fatally shot one of the two alpacas belonging to the Blazer family. The sheriff's office said the shooter or shooters have been identified and will be charged.

From wire reports

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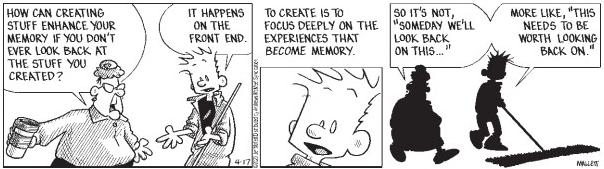
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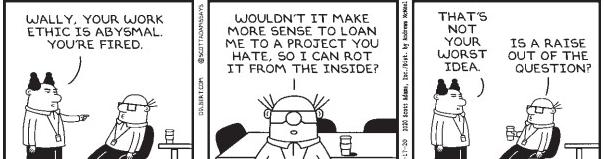
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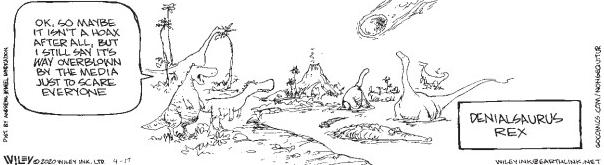
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



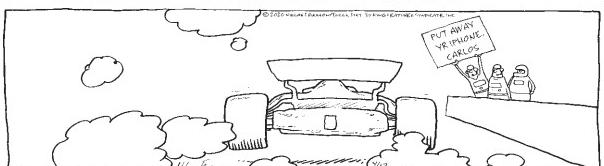
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



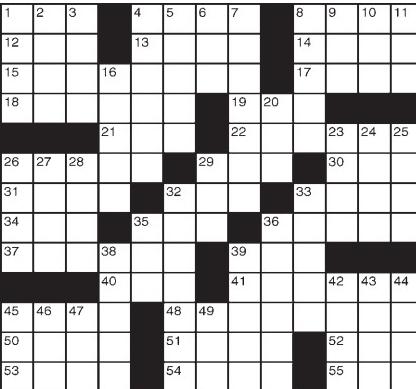
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 NFL six-pointers
4 Rebuff
8 Corp. leaders
12 Seminary subj.
13 Ex-Yankee
Martinez
14 Enlist again
15 Confident words
17 Gumbo need
18 Galoot
19 Conceit
21 "Fresh Air" ailer
22 —Hines (cake mix brand)
26 Play place
29 Apr. check casher
30 Unpaid TV promo
31 Elegance
32 Spring month
33 Endure
34 Devoured
35 Triumphed
36 Stickum
37 Roman god of fire
39 Drunkard
40 TV spots
41 Roman orator
45 Madhouse
48 Circular file
50 Redact
51 Brontë heroine
52 Tolkien monster
53 Takeout order?

DOWN

- 1 Chicago paper, briefly
2 He loved Lucy
3 Punch
4 Treeless tract
5 More pleasant
6 Actress Merkel
7 Parched
8 Sing like Sinatra
9 "A mouse!"
10 Wilder's —Town
11 Resort
16 Mountain chain
20 Gloomy guy
23 IRS employees
24 Admin. aide
25 Cager Archibald

Answer to Previous Puzzle

P	I	L	E	B	O	D	S	P	F	C
I	R	A	N	R	A	V	I	O	O	H
P	O	S	T	C	A	R	D	S	R	I
E	N	T	R	E	E	A	Z	T	E	C
A	L									
L	A	P	P							
A	D	O								
W	A	S	P							
E	T	I	M							
T	E	A	M	S						
L	A	M	P	S						
I	R	A	O	S						
M	A	R	P	S						
E	L	K	N	E						

4-17

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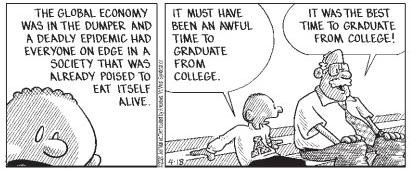
D J Q P J U R W Q P L E
 U L F R W P A Q B K W W J T R E Y
 G L W X G L E E B E L S X A W
 X W B X P Q L E E S D L F K K T W K R Y S ?

G L P J ' W W P T A X W .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WELL-KNOWN FRENCH ARTIST WHO PAINTED A PLETHORA OF FLUFFY SKY FORMATIONS: CLOUD MONET.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals M

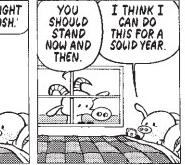
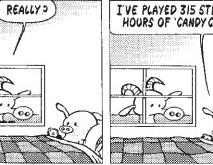
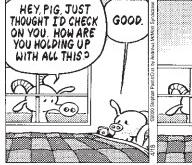
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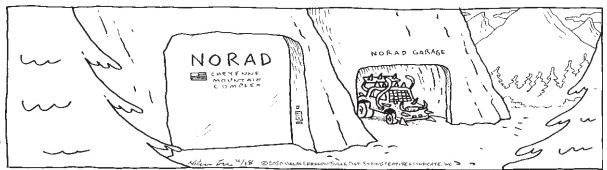
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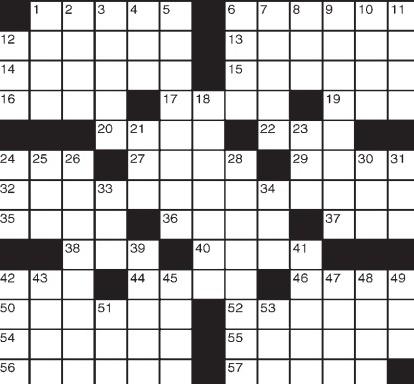
I SAID TAKE A LEFT!

ISN'T IT GREAT?!

Wayne & 4
4-18-20

GO-TO KARAOKE NUMBER

Bizarro

**Eugene Sheffer Crossword****ACROSS****DOWN**

- 1 Choir members
 6 Shred
 12 Broccoli bit
 13 Arm bones
 14 Harshly bright
 15 Squirrel's stash
 16 Soother
 17 Grand tale
 19 Spelldown
 20 Andean land
 22 Pig-poke link
 24 Docs' bloc
 27 Bigwigs
 29 Detail
 31 Al fresco celebrations
 35 Small combo
 36 Donate
 37 Chaps
 38 Orange Muppet
 40 Not difficult
 42 -cone
 44 Org.
 46 High hairstyle
 50 Target at a fiesta
 52 "Whatever you want!"
 54 Giraffe cousins
 55 Band around a sleeve
 56 Mates for mortises
 57 19th president

Answer to Previous Puzzle

T	D	S	N	U	B	C	E	O	S
R	E	L	T	I	N	O	R	E	U
I	S	U	R	E	C	A	N	O	K
B	I	G	A	P	E	G	O		
S	T	A	G	E	R	N	P	D	U
L	U	X	E	R	S	A	C	U	C
A	U	M	A	R	T	S	H	A	N
V	U	W	O	N	P	A	T	I	E
U	C	L	E	O	S	T	C	E	R
Z	O	O	S	T	R	A	S	H	C
E	D	I	E	Y	R	E	O	R	C
D	E	L	E	R	E	D	N	E	E

4-18

CRYPTOQUIP

BJZW BSTGO KSCDM SOP NZGG

Z VSQNJ BHWJ KW DVK HF

X QSF W SX KHFADQ AGDF'K

J STKD? NZCVMDGG'K KWSSV.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHICH MUSICAL MANUSCRIPTS SHOULD BASEBALL PLAYERS ESPECIALLY WANT TO STUDY? BACH'S SCORES.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals H

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Max D. Lederer Jr., Publisher

Lt. Col. Sean Klimek, Europe commander
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Joshua M. Lashbrook, Pacific Chief of Staff

EDITORIAL

Terry Leonard, Editor

Robert H. Reid, Senior Managing Editor
red.robert@stripes.com

Tina Croley, Managing Editor for Content
croley.tina@stripes.com

Sean Moores, Managing Editor for Presentation
moores.sean@stripes.com

Joe Gromelski, Managing Editor for Digital
gromelski.joe@stripes.com

BUREAU STAFF

Europe/Mideast

Erik Slavin, Europe & Mideast Bureau Chief
erik.slavin@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9350; DSN (314)583.9350

Pacific

Aaron Kidd, Pacific Bureau Chief
kidd.aaron@stripes.com
+81-42.552.2511 ext. 88380; DSN (315)227.7380

Washington

Joseph Caciolli, Washington Bureau Chief
caciolli.joseph@stripes.com
(+1)202.2086-0033

Brian Bowers, Assistant Managing Editor, News
bowers.brian@stripes.com

CIRCULATION

Mideast

Robert Reissmann, Mideast Circulation Manager
robert.w.reissmann.raf@mail.mil
xsscirculation@stripes.com
DSN (314)583.9111

Europe

Karen Lewis, Community Engagement Manager
lewis.karen@stripes.com
memberservices@stripes.com
+49(0)631.3615.9090; DSN (314)583.9090

Pacific

Mari Mori, customerhelp@stripes.com
+81-3 6385.3171; DSN (315)227.7333

CONTACT US

Washington

tel: (+1)202.886.0003
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Reader letters

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OPINION

Put Americans back to work fighting the virus

By TRACY WALSH
Bloomberg Opinion

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs since mid-March, when the coronavirus started spreading around the country. Many won't be able to return to work until the outbreak is contained. Meanwhile, there's a proven strategy for containing infectious diseases, which is notoriously difficult to carry out because it's so labor-intensive.

Why don't we solve both problems at once?

With "contact tracing," a mainstay of infectious disease control, health workers identify people who have been infected, contact them, learn who they may have exposed, and reach out to those people to limit the spread. Right now, the coronavirus is too widespread and testing too limited for such a targeted approach to work. But once case numbers become more manageable, the U.S. will move away from what epidemiologists call the "population-based" approach, which requires everybody to self-isolate, and toward one focused on containing individual cases. This will be the only way most of us can get back to normal life without risking devastating new outbreaks.

It's a strategy that's been shown to work against COVID-19 in New Zealand and Iceland. In the U.S., health officials use it to contain mumps and other diseases. But in the current crisis, the U.S. doesn't have enough public-health workers to do the job. Contact tracing helped snuff out Liberia's Ebola outbreak in 2014, but it took 4,000 workers to protect a country of 5 million citizens. Wuhan, China, a city of 11 million, reportedly needed 9,000 contact tracers to suppress COVID-19. Estimates vary, but the U.S. will need 100,000 to 300,000

contact tracers to contain the coronavirus. That's a lot of manpower.

Digital tools, such as apps used in Singapore and South Korea to automatically alert people who have been exposed to the coronavirus, can augment human labor — but they can't replace it. This is especially true in the U.S., where stronger privacy protections and weaker quarantine authority limit technology's reach. The high-profile contact-tracing program under development by Apple and Google will operate on an opt-in basis — which could limit its use substantially. As Dr. Farzad Mostashari put it, "How do you get virtually everyone to put an always-on app on their phones that tracks their contacts, eats battery, and doesn't do anything to delight them?"

So state and local health departments should start thinking about how they can scale up their work forces. A pilot program in Massachusetts could serve as a model for others. The state is working with Partners in Health — the Boston-based nonprofit best known for its work in Haiti — to some hire some 1,000 contact tracers. Since training will be provided, these entry-level jobs are open to anyone with a high school education. The workers will track the ill and exposed using a web-based contact-management system, and ultimately connect them with testing and other services needed for quarantine, such as food delivery and even housing.

In return, entry-level contact tracers will earn \$27 per hour. That's considerably more than the state minimum wage, but given the importance of fighting the virus — and relieving workers' distress during this crisis — it will be money well spent. Epidemiologist Gregg Gonsalves called for a "WPA for public health," referring to the Depression-era program that employed millions to build roads, parks and other projects that endure to this day.

Eradicating the coronavirus would require fewer workers, but the employment situation is, for now, no less dire. And importantly, containing the virus would allow the U.S. economy to return to normal as scientists work on a vaccine.

Many temporary contact tracers could return to their jobs once the crisis abates. For others, it could be a stepping stone to a career in public health, where workers are desperately needed, because more than 50,000 public-health jobs evaporated during the Great Recession. By one estimate the U.S. is short a quarter-million such workers — who will need to be hired if we want to avoid future pandemics.

Expanding contact tracing is one of many ways to shore up the public-health workforce. Lawmakers from both parties have called for a Public Health Infrastructure Fund, which would raise \$15 per person to ensure that the public-health system can meet a "foundational capacity." That would amount to \$4.5 billion, a tiny fraction of the money allocated for coronavirus relief so far. Partnerships with universities, nonprofits and businesses — such as Massachusetts' — might offer another way for cash-strapped public-health agencies to scale up.

Until there's a vaccine for COVID-19 — with luck, sometime next year — coronavirus is going to be a problem. We have, broadly speaking, three choices. We could maintain shelter-in-place indefinitely, devastating the economy. We could end it for everyone, leading to more outbreaks and needless deaths. Or we could be strategic — identifying the sick and at-risk through testing and tracing, suppressing outbreaks, building up our public health capacity, and keeping laid-off workers employed until the economy has recovered enough to reabsorb them. The choice is easy.

Tracy Walsh is an editor for Bloomberg Opinion.

What a post-pandemic commission should look like

By KAREN TUMULTY
The Washington Post

What went wrong? Could the disaster that the coronavirus pandemic has caused have been prevented? And how can we make sure that nothing like it ever happens to this country again?

Those are the questions to which Americans will eventually deserve a straight answer — the kind that can come only from a credible, independent commission whose mandate is finding out why the government was caught so unprepared.

No doubt President Donald Trump, who is incapable of admitting a mistake and recalls at oversight, will fight the idea. He will howl about hoaxes and witch hunts.

But such fact-finding inquiries have taken place after other national traumas — Pearl Harbor, the John F. Kennedy assassination and, most recently, the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. And we owe no less to the tens of thousands who have lost a loved one, as well as the countless health care providers and other essential workers who were called upon to battle a lethal enemy without proper protective equipment.

Whether our broken political system is capable of finding — much less handling — the truth is another question. Partisanship infects every conversation about the virus. Trump has also fostered a climate in which expertise and even simple facts are regarded with suspicion by his defenders.

Realistically, a commission cannot get underway until we have turned the corner on this epidemic. Nor does it seem feasible for one to start until after the November election is behind us.

But it is not too early to think about how one should work. Already, there are at least four different proposals circulating on Capitol Hill, and the concept is picking up bipartisan support.

Former New Jersey Gov. Tom Kean, the Republican who headed the 9/11 Commission, told me that the first and most important challenge for any commission would be making sure the right people are on it. Ideally, he said, they should be figures who are respected across party lines and who are not likely to seek political office in the future.

"Ultimately, it's going to be important that people appointed to the commission have a goal of doing service to their country, not service to their political party," agreed House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who is sponsoring legislation that would set up a 10-member commission that would begin work next February.

There are two people ideally situated to lead the inquiry as its co-chairs: former presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. An inspiring precedent for this was set in Bush's own decision to recruit his father, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton — bitter rivals in the 1992 presidential election — to spearhead what became a spectacularly successful international disaster-relief effort.

There are others who would help bring a sense of high purpose to an independent inquiry.

Start with some who have served both as governors and in high-ranking executive-branched jobs in Washington. Among them are Republicans Mitch Daniels of Indiana, who was George W. Bush's budget director, and Utah's Mike Leavitt, who was Bush's

health and human services secretary. Or Democrats Janet Napolitano, who after governing Arizona was Obama's homeland security secretary, and Kansas's Kathleen Sebelius, who was at the helm of the Health and Human Services Department during the Obama administration.

Keen said that it would also be important for a commission to demonstrate at every step that it is conducting itself in a truly bipartisan fashion. While he was running the 9/11 commission, Keen said, he never made a decision without making sure his Democratic vice chairman, former Indiana congressman Lee Hamilton, was on board. The commission also operated under informal rules in which every member was seated with someone of the other party on either side, and none agreed to make television appearances unless they would be accompanied by a colleague from the other party.

In addition to finding the truth, an inquiry would also have to grapple with the crazy untruths that are being spread on social media and elsewhere. But that, too, is hardly unprecedented. In the aftermath of 9/11, as now, conspiracy theories were rampant. Keen said that rather than ignoring them, he had his staff track down the source of each and every one — once sending investigators as far as Saudi Arabia to do it.

With each day comes new and often contradictory information about how the country got to the dark and terrifying place that it is in. Not until we are able to sort out why will we have confidence that we'll never find ourselves here again.

Karen Tumulty is a Washington Post columnist covering national politics.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Postal Service is showing its worth. Show it some support.

The Boston Globe

Last month, U.S. Postal Service workers delivered "President Trump's Coronavirus Guidelines for America" to households across the country. But Donald Trump, of course, has no interest in helping the agency he relied on to get out his message and feels no patriotic duty to support postal workers who are on the front lines of essential service delivery during the coronavirus pandemic, putting their own health at risk to supply all Americans with medicine supplies and groceries.

Instead, the Trump administration has a long-range plan to privatize the Postal Service. In the meantime, the president wrongly blames longstanding financial problems on a package delivery deal the U.S. Postal Service has with Amazon. That leaves any rescue plan up to Congress. Unless lawmakers step in, the Trump administration and a drop in mail volume connected to COVID-19 just might accomplish what the Internet threatened to do: kill a universal delivery service that traces its roots back to the birth of this nation.

The U.S. Postal Service lost business over the years, as personal letter-writing was overtaken by electronic communication — which has also put dents in common business communications like billing and payments. The agency also bears the burden of a huge pension liability, due to a congressional mandate that it pre-fund its benefit obligations. But the concept of universal delivery is still important in this country, especially in rural areas. Postal workers deliver medicines, packages ordered online, and communications from the government — including Trump's coronavirus guidelines. Voting by mail could also play a role in November's presidential election, as the contagion forces states to explore alternatives to in-person balloting.

Today, the rapid drop in mail volume connected to the coronavirus could be "catastrophic" to that agency, Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va., who chairs the House Subcommittee on Government Operations, told New Hampshire Public Radio. With business advertising halted, mail volume could drop as much as 60% by the end of the year, he said.

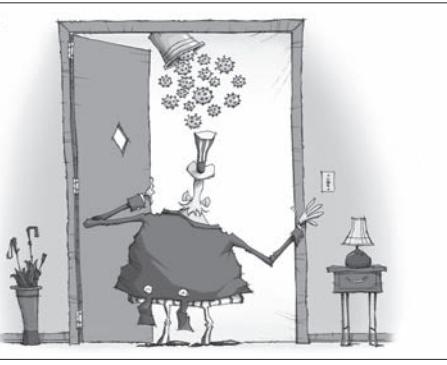
Last year, the U.S. Postal Service reported an \$8.8 billion loss. According to The New York Times, the Postal Service is projecting a \$13 billion revenue shortfall this fiscal year and predicts \$54 billion in losses over 10 years. To offset those grim numbers, the Postal Service is asking lawmakers to support an \$89 billion relief package. However, the Trump administration is fighting that request, and some Republican lawmakers are resisting it, too.

At a recent press conference, Trump said the Postal Service "is losing billions of dollars, and the taxpayers are paying for that money because it delivers packages for Amazon at a very below cost." He wants the agency to raise prices on Amazon package delivery — a push that some see as punishment aimed at Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, who also owns The Washington Post, which often publishes articles that are critical of Trump.

"At the end of the day, they have an agenda," Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, told The Times. "Raise prices, reduce worker benefits and reduce service, make it appear more profitable and set it up for sale."

Added Dimondstein: "The COVID cri-

Tim O'Brien



sis should not be used to achieve political aims."

He's right. Trump has now threatened to veto any stimulus package that includes funding to shore up the agency. Congress should call his bluff, and do what it takes to save the U.S. Postal Service or make the president pay the political consequences of signing its death warrant.

Trump wants to reopen the states, but we're not there yet

Los Angeles Times

Columnist Holman Jenkins offered an analogy in The Wall Street Journal last weekend that captures the conundrum created by the U.S. response to COVID-19. "Imagine a problem that can be solved by holding your head underwater," Jenkins wrote, "but stops being solved when you lift your head out." In other words, the stay-at-home measures adopted to protect against the outbreak are damaging in their own right, and not a cure for the disease.

In fact, there is no known cure, just a number of drug therapies being tested and vaccines in development. That's why it's so disturbing to hear President Donald Trump assert, as he did again Monday, that he has the power to "open up the states," presumably by lifting the restrictions on movement and commerce.

"When somebody's the president of the United States, the authority is total," Trump said at Monday's coronavirus briefing. "It's total. And the governors know that."

Oh please. Trump has a lot of influence over the country's response to COVID-19, for better and worse. But thankfully, one thing he cannot do is order states to change the restrictions they've put on the public to safeguard health and safety — a core function of state and local governments.

As University of California, Berkeley School of Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky explained in The Times last month, "no federal law gives the president power to order businesses to close or, for that matter, to open." Nor is this Congress going to give this president that power.

There's no question that the coronavirus-fighting measures have flattened the economy as they've flattened the curve of COVID-19. The restrictions have taken a huge toll on businesses and their workers, especially at retailers, services and manufacturers whose employees can't do their jobs from home. Unemployment has climbed at unimaginable speed, and as workers have lost income, the pain has spread across the economy in the form of shrinking sales, unpaid bills and canceled outings.

Some critics of the social distancing measures are pushing Trump to act because they believe the damage being inflicted to the economy is greater than the potential harm from the coronavirus — an argument that has only gained steam as

the restrictions have slowed the disease's march. Meanwhile, Trump has his own political motives for wanting to get the country's commercial engine up and running again: It's tough for a president to win reelection in the midst of a recession.

Yet the hard medical reality is that we can't keep the virus from exploding again until we know who has it, where they have been, whom they come into contact with and who has become immune — and only then if we have an adequate supply of an effective treatment for the disease it causes.

That means being able to test for COVID-19 at a scale we're not even approaching today. That means having a widespread ability to screen people regularly for the antibodies that demonstrate immunity. That means having technologies and protocols to identify, notify, quarantine and test all the people who've recently come into contact with each person newly diagnosed with COVID-19.

A much more realistic announcement about the path back to normalcy was the one Monday by the governors of California, Oregon and Washington, three early adopters of tough social distancing rules that have dramatically slowed the spread of COVID-19. The governors said they would work together to develop a "shared approach for reopening our economies" — one that identifies clear indicators for communities to restart public life and business.

It's more a statement of principles than a blueprint for action at the moment, but the priorities laid out are the right ones.

Inevitably, moving back toward life before the coronavirus will require decisions about how much risk to take and who will be most exposed to it. That's a political decision, not a medical one, even if it is informed by medical experts (as it should be). And it's a decision made by officials closest to the people whose lives and livelihoods are at risk, not one man in the Oval Office.

Biden's promises to Sanders voters not well thought out

The Wall Street Journal

So much for triangulating. After Bernie Sanders suspended his presidential run last week, Joe Biden waited barely 24 hours before racing to bolster his progressive bona fides. Biden said Thursday he plans to make 60-year-olds eligible for Medicare, while erasing undergraduate student debt for middle-class borrowers.

For months, Biden has opposed Medicare for All, saying a better path would be to "build on" "Obamacare" with a "public option." If he really believed this, he wouldn't deprive his public option of 20 million potential customers. That's roughly the number of Americans 60 to 64 whom Biden now wants to let hop on Medicare. Already Medicare is scheduled to be insolvent by 2026. Plans to shore it up for

seniors generally go in the opposite direction, slowly raising the retirement age to, say, 67. Sixty-five isn't what it used to be. In 1970, life expectancy in the U.S. was 70.8. Now it's about eight years longer. By lowering the age of eligibility instead, Biden would begin shifting Medicare's focus from seniors to everybody else. Don't worry about the funding, he insists, since the extra costs would be "financed out of general revenues."

Biden's new left turn on student loans is equally sharp. His old agenda had three big line items. Amid the coronavirus pandemic, he would cancel \$10,000 for each debtor. Up to \$50,000 more could be forgiven over five years for people "working in schools, government, and other non-profit settings." Income-based repayment plans would get more generous. Instead of taking 10% of the borrower's discretionary earnings, it would be 5%, with the balance written off after 20 years.

Last week Biden added another bullet: cancel all federal undergraduate tuition debt for many borrowers who went to public schools, including four-year universities. The forgiveness would be given to anyone who has \$125,000 or less. It is, of course, Sanders' plan to zero out every last penny of student debt, but it is a huge move in that direction. How much would it cost? There's no explanation.

Biden is trying to make his candidacy alluring to fans of Sanders, the socialist who called for a "political revolution." The trouble for Biden in November will be selling suburbanites on his new proposal for Medicare for All on the installment plan.

Prep for US mail-in voting now to make it an effective option

The Washington Post

"Republicans should fight very hard when it comes to state wide mail-in voting," President Donald Trump tweeted last week. Mail-in voting, he explained, "doesn't work out well for Republicans."

The relevant question, though, is not whether mail-in voting would "work out" for Republicans, but whether it would work out for American democracy during the coronavirus crisis. If Trump has a better alternative, he should present it.

Public health experts continue to warn Americans not to leave the house unnecessarily, and certainly not to pack into a polling place with many other people. Last week's disastrous election in Wisconsin provides a peek at what happens when Republicans "fight very hard" against mail-in balloting, the way Trump suggested.

Given the potential dangers of in-person voting, and the problems with online voting, a mass shift to mail-in voting is the most credible option during a time of social distancing. States such as Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii and (deep-red) Utah conduct all of their elections by mail. Though the system is immune from fraud, they have not experienced major problems with illegal voting. Electoral fraud of all types is extremely rare across the nation.

About 30 additional states allow people to vote absentee for any reason. Trump admitted that he voted in last month's Florida primary by mail. No doubt many more voters will request absentee ballots in the coming months, a move that states should encourage by sending out mail-in ballot applications to all registered voters. States will have to work out some kinks, ensuring they have enough ballots to dispatch and machines to process them. Some polling locations must be kept open for people without fixed mailing addresses or with vision problems. Simple measures such as ballot tracking can combat absentee ballot fraud. Yet the president insists that only groups that happen to be Republican-leaning, such as seniors and military voters, should be allowed to vote by mail.

The only alternative appears to be the Wisconsin model — that is, chaos — or postponing elections. Particularly come November.



MILITARY MATTERS



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Deals

Wednesday's transactions

FOOTBALL
National Football League

ATLANTA FALCONS — Agreed to terms with CB Josh King.

CHIEFS — Signed DeRoy Robertson-Harris to a restricted free agent tender.

DETROIT LIONS — Released TE Paul Beverly, WR Jonathan Duhart and LB Steve Longino.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS — Signed DE DeAndre Washington to a one-year contract.

BASKETBALL
Women's National Basketball Association

WASHINGTON MYSTICS — Acquired C Tina Charles from the Connecticut Sun for a first-round pick, 2021 first, second and third-round picks, and G Shatori Walker-Kimbrough.

HOCKEY
National Hockey League

NASHVILLE PREDATORS — Signed D Alexandre Carrier to a three-year contract.

Pro basketball

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division						
	GP	W	L	Pts	GF	GA
Toronto	40	18	22	46	710	717
Boston	40	21	19	47	672	3
Philadelphia	39	26	13	59	693	776
Brooklyn	39	25	14	58	649	710
New York	39	24	15	57	649	726
Southeast Division						
Miami	41	24	18	61	600	604
Orlando	30	35	46	12	625	625
Washington	24	24	10	48	590	590
Charlotte	23	34	26	56	429	429
Atlanta	20	46	30	339	292	34
Central Division						
Milwaukee	53	12	815	—	—	—
Chicago	40	22	18	50	600	604
Detroit	32	22	10	44	590	590
Cleveland	20	46	30	339	292	34
St. Louis	20	47	299	22	—	—
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Southwest Division						
Houston	40	24	22	662	—	—
Dallas	40	27	597	1%	—	—
Memphis	32	27	5	59	590	590
New Orleans	28	36	438	12	590	590
San Antonio	27	36	428	12	590	590
Northwest Division						
Denver	49	14	22	662	—	—
Utah	41	23	61	1%	—	—
Oklahoma City	40	23	61	1%	—	—
Portland	29	37	439	14%	—	—
Minnesota	15	25	59	297	23%	—
Pacific Division						
L.A. Lakers	49	14	778	—	—	—
Oakland	49	14	778	—	—	—
Sacramento	28	36	438	21%	—	—
Phoenix	26	39	409	24	—	—
Golden State	15	25	59	297	23%	—
All games postponed at least until mid-May.						

Pro hockey

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division						
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF
Boston	70	41	28	10	225	193
Tampa Bay	70	43	21	10	235	193
Toronto	70	36	35	9	81	237
Montreal	91	31	67	9	71	221
Buffalo	70	25	45	12	69	221
Detroit	71	17	54	12	59	193
Washington	69	41	29	20	245	210
Philadelphia	69	41	21	7	89	232
Baltimore	70	35	35	9	70	217
Carolina	68	38	23	9	81	222
Columbus	70	33	23	15	81	180
N.Y. Islanders	70	37	23	5	79	222
N.Y. Rangers	70	37	23	5	79	234
New Jersey	70	29	43	5	59	189
Metropolitan Division						
Washington	69	41	29	20	245	210
Philadelphia	69	41	21	7	89	232
Baltimore	70	35	35	9	70	217
Carolina	68	38	23	9	81	222
Columbus	70	33	23	15	81	180
N.Y. Islanders	70	37	23	5	79	222
N.Y. Rangers	70	37	23	5	79	234
New Jersey	70	29	43	5	59	189
Western Conference						
Central Division						
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF
St. Louis	70	15	56	10	41	225
Colorado	70	42	20	8	92	237
Edmonton	70	42	20	8	92	237
Vancouver	70	36	35	9	75	217
Winnipeg	61	37	25	6	80	216
Nashville	70	35	26	9	78	215
Avalanche	70	33	23	15	81	187
Arizona	70	33	23	8	78	187
Los Angeles	70	29	35	5	64	178
San Jose	70	29	35	5	63	182
Pacific Division						
Vegas	71	17	56	8	86	221
Edmonton	71	37	25	9	83	225
Vancouver	70	36	35	9	75	217
Winnipeg	61	37	25	6	80	216
Nashville	70	35	26	9	78	215
Avalanche	70	33	23	15	81	187
Arizona	70	33	23	8	78	187
Los Angeles	70	29	35	5	64	178
San Jose	70	29	35	5	63	182
All games postponed until early May.						

ALL GAMES POSTPONED AT LEAST UNTIL MID-MAY.

Football dependent on campuses

Commissioners:
No games until
students return

By RALPH D. RUSSO
Associated Press

The commissioners of the nation's major college football conferences held a 30-minute conference call with Vice President Mike Pence and stressed that college sports cannot return from the coronavirus shutdown until campuses have reopened.

The 10 commissioners, along with the athletic director of Notre Dame, comprise the College Football Playoff management committee.

"We were able to talk about the differences between us and professional sports," American Athletic Conference Commissioner Mike Aresco said. "We talked about how academics and college athletics were inseparable."

Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby said Pence asked good questions and was "hopeful and optimistic" about the fight against the coronavirus. The pandemic has shut down all major sporting events since mid-March and forced colleges to close campuses and move classes online.



The commissioners of the major college football conferences held a 30-minute conference call Wednesday with Vice President Mike Pence, above, and stressed to him that college sports could not return from the coronavirus shutdown until college campuses have reopened.

that is the lifeline for many athletic departments.

"(We) made the point we were concerned and wanted to get back to having kids attending college and opening up our colleges and universities," Bowlsby said. "That until that happened, we weren't going to be having any sports."

The commissioners would like the major college football season to start at the same time all over the country, which could be difficult depending on how the pandemic fades.

"We talked a little about whether there would be a national policy because, obviously, if governors have different policies you're going to have some issues," Aresco said. "If California isn't allowing football and Ohio is that's going to be issue for what is obviously a national enterprise."

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the United States' top infectious disease expert, said in a Snapchat interview it is unlikely sporting events can happen this summer with large crowds in attendance.

European Athletics Championships, which are still set to be held in Paris from Aug. 25-30. The Tour then ends on Paris' famed Champs-Elysees avenue on the same day the rescheduled French Open tennis tournament starts a few miles away at Roland Garros.

"A magnificent Indian Summer," Prudhomme said.

A cooler one than Tour riders are used to, as well. The temperatures in September aren't likely to be as hot as in July, meaning riders may have a bit more energy on those tough mountain climbs.

"Of course that's totally possible, because in mid-September there won't be a heat wave up in the Alps," Prudhomme said.

The Tour was set to start on June 27, but those plans were scrapped on Tuesday because of coronavirus restrictions. The International Cycling Union announced the Tour's new dates on Wednesday.

AP sports writers Samuel Petrequini in Brussels and Graham Dunbar in Geneva contributed.



A spectator sits next to a banner reading "Thank you to the Tour de France" during the 18th stage of the cycling race last July 25. The start of this year's Tour has been pushed back to Aug. 29.

Prudhomme said organizers opted against having the start in early August, saying it was wiser to push back "as far away as possible from the pandemic" in the hope that social distancing restrictions will have eased.

While there is a big gaping hole in the global sporting calendar for the coming months, the schedule in France is suddenly looking very busy.

The start of the Tour in Nice overlaps with the end of the Eu-

COLLEGE FOOTBALL/AUTO RACING

NCAA trying to plan for upcoming season

By MITCH STACY
Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Spring football was shelved because of the coronavirus. There is still plenty of work going on in college football.

With the pandemic casting uncertainty on the 2020 season, programs are starting to wrangle with two weighty issues: Getting ready to play some kind of season if it is safe to do so and trying to manage what for many would be a substantial financial blow if the season is shortened or canceled.

The NCAA two weeks ago formed a working group to look at issues such as how much pre-season practice and conditioning would be required once play is green-lighted again. The NCAA said "it is premature to establish a timeline for when these scenarios may be put into place."

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said the discussion is just beginning on prepare-to-play issues after most programs had spring football practice shortened or wiped out and had to deal with their spring sports being called to a halt.

"Do we feel we need a longer period of time to help them physically get back into the grind?" Smith said last week. "Maybe you need two weeks straight without pads. I don't know that. That's where the collaborative of the medical people and the strength coaches and everybody across the country has to occur. A hard date will come in relation to what we figure out there, and we haven't figured it out yet."

Buckeyes coach Ryan Day, in an interview on ESPN, said six weeks would be a reasonable "starting point" for getting ready to play. Two weeks ago, Alabama coach Nick Saban suggested "teaching sessions on the field" over the summer.

"If you look at statistics historically on concussions, injuries, the most concentrated time that you practice and not play is in fall camp," Saban said on a conference call with reporters. "You have more practices, you have to

DO YOU KNOW?

Losing football would be a devastating financial blow to the NCAA and college athletics programs. Top football programs like those at Ohio State and Alabama pump millions into their athletic department budgets, funding less lucrative sports. The NCAA has already announced a cut of \$375 million in funding that would normally be distributed to various programs from the NCAA tournaments that were canceled.

SOURCE: Associated Press

spend more time on the field. So I don't know that increasing that is going to be beneficial in getting people ready to play."

On the financial side, losing football would be a devastating blow. Ohio State and other top football programs pump millions into their athletic department budgets, funding less lucrative sports. The NCAA is also slashing \$375 million that would normally be distributed to various programs from the NCAA tournaments that were canceled.

Georgia Tech has made no cuts to staffers' salaries, but said an early estimate of losses blamed on the pandemic will exceed \$3 million. Wisconsin deputy athletic director Chris McIntosh estimated the Badgers lost some \$4 million in revenue due to the loss of the NCAA Tournament and Big Ten Tournament.

"So far, the biggest lesson in terms of planning that we've experienced as it relates to COVID-19 is it's incredibly humbling and it's unpredictable," McIntosh said. "We're in the mode of preparing for anything, really, and predicting nothing."

Louisville last week announced 10% salary cuts for coaches and athletic staff, including football and men's basketball. At Stanford, football coach David Shaw, women's basketball coach Tara VanDerveer and men's basketball coach Jerod Haase all volunteered to take less pay.



JAY LAPRETE/AP

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said discussions are just beginning on prepare-to-play issues after most programs had spring football practice shortened or wiped out and had to deal with all of their spring sports being called to a halt.



WILL LESTER/AP

Jimmie Johnson carries his youngest daughter Lydia while trailed by his oldest daughter Genevieve and wife Chandra before a NASCAR Cup Series race on March 1 in Fontana, Calif. Johnson wanted to retire from full-time racing after this season, but the coronavirus pandemic has brought his final season to an unexpected pause, and now the seven-time champion isn't sure what his future holds.

Johnson finds farewell season stuck in limbo

By JENNA FRYER
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Jimmie Johnson, seven-time NASCAR champion and all-around Everyman, has added home-schooling elementary teacher to his résumé.

The sports stoppage from the coronavirus pandemic has thrown a red flag on Johnson's farewell tour. He had planned a final season of racing a full NASCAR schedule, but so far that has lasted just four races.

Amid all the uncertainty, Johnson doesn't know when he'll be back in his beloved No. 48 Chevrolet.

NASCAR is publicly targeting a May 9 return at Martinsville, privately holding its breath for a May 24 reopening at the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte but vowing to complete the entire 36-race points schedule.

In the meantime, Johnson teaches his two daughters' daily school lessons, continues his fanatical fitness routine, spends hours upon hours on his racing simulator and waits to see how his pending retirement plan goes.

"I don't know what's going to happen in the coming months and if we'll be able to run the full season or not," Johnson said last week. "I feel like I set out to make 2020 my last full-time year, but I've always left the door open for other racing in NASCAR and abroad for the future."

"I feel like I am still pretty much in that path. I am hopeful that we get our full year in and we can get back going in a month or so ... and that I can run the season

By the numbers

19

Number of seasons, including this season, Jimmie Johnson has competed in the NASCAR Cup Series.

7

Number of NASCAR Cup championships won by Johnson, who is tied with Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt.

5th

Where Johnson was sitting in the NASCAR Cup standings when the current season was suspended.

SOURCE: Associated Press

to its entirety. I really don't have an answer — it's up in the air just as much is in the world."

This 19th season was supposed to be his last as a full-time driver at Hendrick Motorsports because

Johnson, now 44 and father of two active young girls, doesn't want to live in a motorhome at tracks across the country 38 weekends a year. Johnson wanted to shift his racing to focus on a bucket list — the kind of schedule former Formula One champion Fernando Alonso, a new friend, has created.

This unconventional route works for drivers who still have the skills and ability to compete but are exhausted from their full-time jobs. NASCAR has the longest season in sports and participants average three nights a week — the weekend — away from home.

Johnson figured he'd transition to the kind of competitions he could never do as a NASCAR racer: Besides triathlons, Iron Man competitions and cycling pursuits, Johnson was locked in on trying IndyCar and had a test scheduled for early April that was canceled because of the pandemic.

Now he's adapting to what he described as the most free time he's ever had as an adult and is eager to get back to work. Johnson was off to a decent start before the season was suspended; through four races he had a pair of top-10 finishes and was fifth in points.

Impressive for Johnson, who has slogged through a winless streak dating to June 4, 2017. He'd unburdened himself this year of the internal pressure to win a record eighth championship that would separate him from Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt. And he is far more comfortable in the new Camaro that General Motors is racing this year.

AUTO RACING/MLB/GOLF



ANDREW LEAGUE, BRISTOL HERALD COURIER/AP

Speedway Motorsports, LLC announced Wednesday that it has laid off 180 employees across its facilities and furloughed another 100 employees due to the coronavirus pandemic. Its tracks include Bristol Motor Speedway, in Bristol, Tenn., shown above, and seven other speedways.

No races have led to job cuts of 15% at 8 NASCAR tracks

By ALEX ANDREJEV
The Charlotte Observer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Layoffs are in effect at Charlotte Motor Speedway and seven other NASCAR tracks after parent company Speedway Motorsports, LLC announced Wednesday that it has laid off 180 employees across its facilities and furloughed another 100 employees due to the coronavirus pandemic. Approximately 15% of Speedway Motorsports' overall staff was affected by the job cuts that took place Tuesday and Wednesday.

In addition to Charlotte Motor Speedway, the motorsports entertainment company owns and operates Atlanta Motor Speedway, Bristol Motor Speedway, Kentucky Speedway, Las Vegas Motor Speedway, New Hampshire Motor Speedway, New Jersey Raceway and Texas Motor Speedway.

About one third of the staff at Texas Motor Speedway was let go, according to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Speedway Motorsports, LLC said the company is providing a severance package to each person affected by job eliminations. Some of the impacted staff may also be rehired as event day staff once racing resumes.

"The extraordinary circumstances presented by this pandemic and the subsequent shutdown of the economy have had a significant impact on our business," a company statement read. "Since the beginning of the shutdown four weeks ago, we have kept our entire team on full pay while our properties remained dormant. In that time, it has become clear that we must be a more nimble, more efficient organization."

The layoffs and furloughs impacted all departments across all Speedway Motorsports subsidiaries.

Speedway Motorsports, LLC also owns souvenir merchandising company SMI Properties,

By the numbers

180	100	20%
Employees laid off across eight NASCAR tracks owned by Speedway Motorsports, LLC.	Employees furloughed by Speedway Motorsports LLC because of the coronavirus pandemic shutdown.	Pay cuts announced in March for NASCAR employees, not including 25% cuts for executives.

SOURCE: Charlotte Observer

race car manufacturer U.S. Legend Cars International, radio network Performance Racing Network and zMAX Micro Lubricant, which all maintain operations in the Charlotte region.

SMI does not qualify for the forgivable loans through the Paycheck Protection Program, designed by the government to help small businesses get through this crisis. The restructuring at the speedways follows pay and job cuts at NASCAR, as well as individual teams. In late March, NASCAR announced 25% pay cuts for executives and 20% pay cuts for other employees.

"We understand this is a difficult time for all of you and your families, but these steps are necessary measures for our company without races on track each week," NASCAR President Steve Phelps said in a letter to employees. "A lot of time and thought was put into how to approach this in a manner that results in the least impact to our employees."

On April 3, NASCAR further announced company-wide layoffs that were the result of October's merger with International Speedway Corporation, which owns and

operates tracks such as Daytona International Speedway, Talladega Superspeedway and Richmond Raceway, among others, in addition to radio network Motor Racing Network.

These layoffs primarily impacted staffing at Iowa Speedway, which dismissed a majority of its staff, according to NBCSports.com, but NASCAR has not confirmed the total number of layoffs across the company.

As NASCAR, its speedways and teams juggle staff reductions, the organizations and its fans are looking ahead to when the season will likely be able to resume. NASCAR's next event is scheduled for May 9 at Martinsville, but the timing of that race is unlikely given Virginia's stay-at-home order that extends through June 10.

When the order went into effect March 30, NASCAR said in a statement that it was "aware of the stay-at-home order issued for Virginia" and that it "will continue discussions with public health officials and medical experts as we assess rescheduling options."

An updated schedule has not yet been released by NASCAR.

Report: Halladay was on drugs, doing stunts before crash

By TERRY SPENCER
Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Baseball Hall of Famer Roy Halladay had high levels of amphetamines in his system and was doing extreme acrobatics when he lost control of his small plane and nosedived into the Gulf of Mexico in 2017, killing him, a National Transportation Safety Board report issued Wednesday said.

Halladay had amphetamine levels about 10 times therapeutic levels in his blood along with a high level of morphine and an anti-depressant that can impair judgement as he performed high-pitch climbs and steep turns, sometimes within 5 feet of the water, the report says about the Nov. 7, 2017, crash off the coast of Florida.

The maneuvers put loads of nearly two-times gravity on the plane, an Icon A5 Halladay had purchased a month earlier. On the last maneuver, Halladay entered a steep climb and his speed fell to about 85 mph. The propeller-driven plane went into a nosedive and smashed into the water. The report says Halladay, 40, died of blunt force trauma and drowning.

The report does not give a final reason for the crash. That is expected to be issued soon.

About a week before the crash, the former Toronto Blue Jays and Philadelphia Phillies star had flown the plane under Tampa Bay's iconic Skyway Bridge, posting on social media, "flying the Icon A5 over the water is like fly-

ing a fighter jet!"

Halladay, an eight-time All-Star, pitched a perfect game and a playoff no-hitter in 2010. He played for the Blue Jays from 1998 to 2009 and for the Phillies from 2009-13, going 203-105 with a 3.35 ERA. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame posthumously last year.

Halladay had taken off from a lake near his home about 15 minutes before the crash and a previous report says he was flying at about 105 mph just 11 feet above the water before he started doing his maneuvers. He had about 700 hours of flight time after getting his pilot's license in 2013, the previous report said, including 51 hours in Icon A5s with 14 in the plane that crashed. The report says Halladay was treated for substance abuse twice between 2013 and 2015.

Rolled out in 2014, the A5 is an amphibious aircraft meant to be treated like an ATC, a piece of weekend recreational gear with folding wings that can easily be towed on a trailer to a lake where it can take off from the water.

The man who led the plane's design, 55-year-old John Murray Karkow, died while flying an A5 over California's Lake Berryessa on May 8, 2017, a crash the NTSB attributed to pilot error.

Because of that crash, Icon issued guidance to its owners two weeks before Halladay's accident saying that while low-altitude flying "can be one of the most rewarding and exciting types of flying," it "comes with an inherent set of additional risks that require additional considerations."

PGA hopes to resume events in June, play into December

By DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

The PGA Tour laid out an ambitious plan Thursday to resume its season the second week of June and keep fans away for at least a month, conceding that any return to golf depends on whether it can be played safely amid the coronavirus outbreak.

The Charles Schwab Challenge at Colonial in Fort Worth, Texas, was pushed back to June 11-14. Assuming golf gets the green light from government and health officials, the tour then would have an official tournament every week through Dec. 6 except for a Thanksgiving break.

"Our hope is to play a role — responsibly — in the world's return to enjoying the things we love," PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan said. "But as we've stressed

on several occasions, we will resume competition only when ... it is considered safe to do so under the guidance of the leading health authorities."

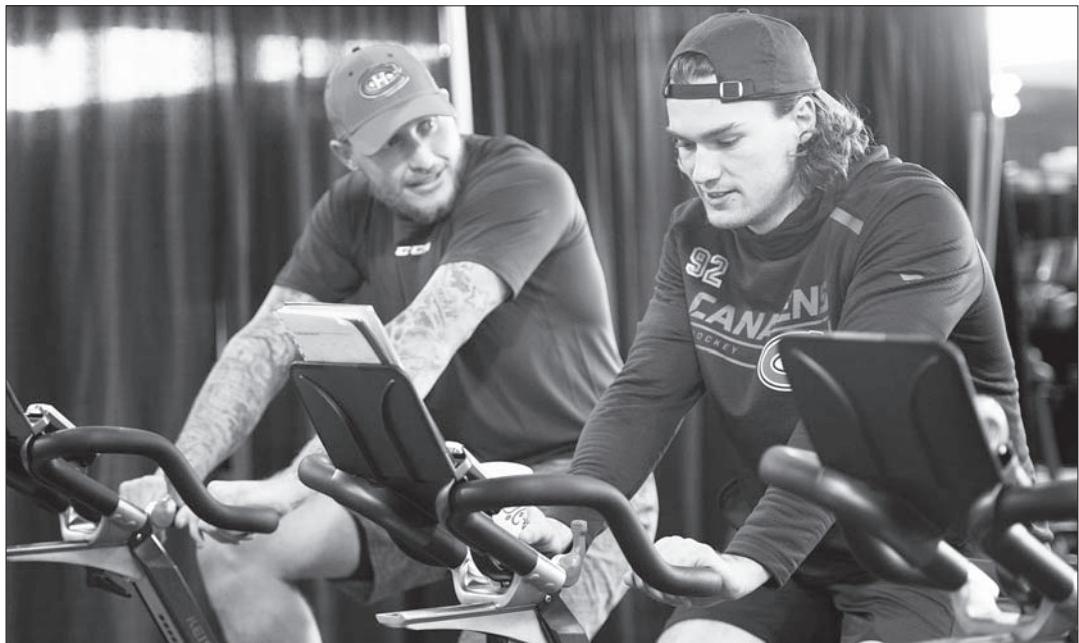
Golf is the first sport to announce plans for a restart, although its arenas are far different from other sports because it is played over some 400 acres.

Even as it announced a truncated schedule, several key details were still being contemplated, such as testing for COVID-19 at tournaments.

"We have a level of confidence that is based upon ... changes and developments being made in the world of testing, available tests," said Andy Pazder, the tour's chief officer of tournaments and competition.

The RBC Heritage at Hilton Head will be played after Colonial on June 18-21.

NHL



GRAHAM HUGHES, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

Then-Montreal Canadiens players Nicolas Deslauriers, left, and Jonathan Drouin work out on bikes during medical examinations before training camp on Sept. 13, 2018. Hockey players trying to stay in shape with the NHL season on hold have been using various ways to stay in shape, from stationary bikes to rollerblading.

With no ice, players get creative

Simulating skating an impossible task

BY STEPHEN WHYNO

Associated Press

Taking ice away from NHL players has caused some to resort to desperate measures.

New York Islanders captain Anders Lee bought a Peloton. Anaheim defenseman Josh Manson wants a pair of roller blades. League-leading scorer Leon Draisaitl of Edmonton stickhandles around his dog.

"Whatever works."

"You're kind of going back to that 'Rocky' mentality where you're doing pushups and situps and punching the cow," Columbus forward Nick Foligno said.

NHL players are running, biking and trying to stay in shape in case the season resumes after being put on pause because of the coronavirus pandemic. While many athletes can replicate their sports — NBA players are missing the gym — hockey players have no way to truly replace skating while rinks are closed.

"I don't think too many people

have access to rinks or anything like that, and that's a huge hurdle for a player," Washington defenseman John Carlson said. "It doesn't matter how hard you train, the on-ice stuff is different and we're going to have to pick it up pretty quick when things turn around there."

While there remains plenty of uncertainty over whether the NHL will play again this season, players are proceeding as though they will. Aside from a few exceptions, most haven't skated since before play stopped March 12, and self-quarantine guidelines will keep them off the ice for at least another week and likely longer.

This is nowhere near normal for athletes used to spending the spring gearing up for the intensity and brutal grind of the NHL playoffs.

"I can just do my workouts and just try to stick as close to a routine as you can," New Jersey defenseman P.K. Subban said. "It's hard because you're anticipating the season coming back, but at the same time it's so much time."

And when you're not skating, there's nothing you can do that's going to mimic skating."

Little things have to fill the void for now. Team trainers are sending out customized plans to players with home gym setups. Running has replaced practicing. Biking might be the only way to simulate the high intensity of a shift — sort of.

"That all helps and it's great, but there's absolutely nothing you can do to prepare for the ins and outs of a shift and the physicality of it," Boston defenseman Torey Krug said. "Not only are you trying to mimic the skating motion, but there's no way you can train for going into the corner with a guy who's 6-foot-2, 210 pounds and trying to out-battle him and get the puck and skate away from him."

Draisaitl's Edmonton teammate, Connor McDavid, is staying strong by lifting his dog, Lenny, and Lee takes his dogs for a run to keep his heart rate up. Philadelphia's Scott Laughton does yoga with his girlfriend on occasion, which is one way to keep his



JACK HARRIS, LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

NHL players, clockwise from top left, Logan Couture, Ryan Getzlaf, Anze Kopitar, and Marc-Andre Fleury stay in touch via video chat.

mind and body sharp.

Manson said he doesn't want to risk going to a store to get roller blades. Anaheim teammate Hampus Lindholm has taken his blades for a spin or two during quarantine, but he and others around the league are quick to point out it doesn't require the same balance or train the same muscles as ice skating.

"You don't get the buildup of lactic acid and having to deal with your groins and your hip motion when you're digging into the ice

and trying to stop and start, and that's a big part of it," Krug said.

Minnesota's Zach Parise tries to stay sharp playing 1-on-1 in the basement with his 6-year-old son, Jax. He also bought a bike because he is not much of a runner.

"You just try to do what you can, make it fun," Foligno said. "It's our job. We're pros and athletes for a reason, so it's something we have to make sure we continue to do and be ready if called upon."

AP hockey writer John Wawrow and AP sports writer Dan Gelston contributed.

NBA/NFL

Tough times

Jordan says Bulls' final championship season was 'trying'

By STEVE REED
Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Michael Jordan described his final NBA championship season with the Chicago Bulls as a "trying year."

"We were all trying to enjoy that year knowing it was coming to an end," Jordan told Good Morning America on Thursday. Jordan appeared on the show via video conference from his home in Florida to promote the "The Last Dance," a 10-part documentary series focused on the final year of the '90s Bulls dynasty that won six NBA titles in eight years.

'Phil Jackson started off the season saying this was the last dance — and we played it that way.'

Michael Jordan
on the Bulls
1997-98 season

The beginning of the season, it started when (general manager) Jerry Krause told (coach) Phil Jackson that he could go 82-0 and he would never get a chance to come back," Jordan said. "Knowing that I had married myself to him, and if he wasn't going to be the coach, then obviously I wasn't going to play. So Phil started off the season saying this was the last dance — and we played it that way."

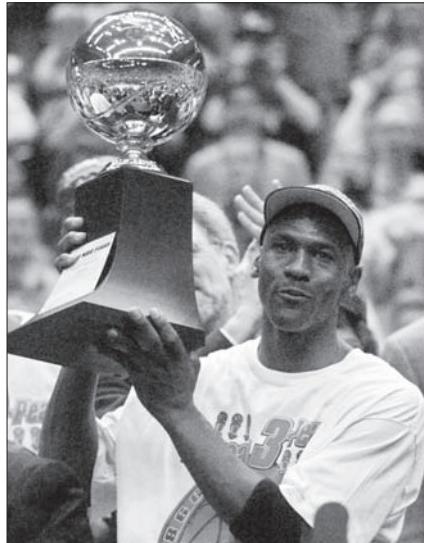
The series will debut Sunday night on ESPN in the United States and on Netflix internationally over five consecutive Sundays through May 17. There will be two hour-long episodes each of those nights.

Jordan said Thursday that after Jackson told the team it was to be the final season together, the Bulls focused on completing the task of a second three-peat.

"Mentally it tugged at you that had this come to an end, but it also centered our focus to making sure we ended it right," Jordan said. "As sad as it sounded at the beginning of the year, we tried to rejoice and enjoy the year and finish it off the right way."

The documentary was originally scheduled to be released in June during the NBA Finals, but ESPN made the decision to accelerate its release due to the lack of live sports programming because of the coronavirus pandemic. The series has been billed to include never-before-seen footage from that season, during which the team chased its sixth championship.

But the documentary covers



Michael Jordan holds the MVP trophy after Chicago defeated the Utah Jazz 87-86 in Game 6 of the NBA Finals in Salt Lake City on Sunday, June 14, 1998. It proved to be the final hurrah for Jordan's '90s Bulls dynasty, winners of six NBA titles in eight years.

JACK SMITH/AP



A fan wears a Michael Jordan jersey before the NBA All-Star Rising Stars game in Chicago on Feb. 14, 2020.

NAM Y. HUH/AP

more than just the final season.

The documentary shows Bulls owner Jerry Reinsdorf and Jordan arguing about a foot injury he suffered during his second NBA season.

Jordan wanted to play through the injury after doctors told the team there was a 90% chance he would recover.

Reinsdorf, however, did not want the star guard to play for fear it might ruin his career.

"I said to Michael, 'you're not thinking about the risk-reward ratio,'" Reinsdorf said in the clip aired by GMA. "If you had a terrible headache and I gave you a bottle of pills and nine of the pills would cure you and one of the pills would kill you, would you take a pill?"

Jordan replied that "it depends on how (expletive) bad the headache is."

Reinsdorf ultimately won out;

Jordan sat out 64 games that season before returning for the playoffs.

Jordan also talks about his time at the University of North Carolina where he would write his mother asking for money for postage stamps so he could send her letters and to pay his phone bill.

"It's a little different today," Jordan said. "I had a phone bill in college that was \$60 or less, but I only had \$20 in my account. The thing that people will learn, and my kids will laugh about when they see it, is we used postage stamps back in those days. Looking at the video you will see things that people have forgot, that life was this way."

"We didn't have Instagram or Twitter, so you had to live life as it came. ... Spending time with friends and family, it wasn't the phone. It was in presence — and you wrote letters."

Jordan discussed his parents during the interview with Good Morning America, saying they were the biggest influence in his life. He said he learned many valuable lessons from them, including the ability to learn from the negatives in life and turn them into positives.

He also praised his older brother, Larry.

"I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for my brother Larry," Jordan said. "Larry pushed me. We used to fight every day. But through that fight emerged someone like me. He's right next to me and supports me."

The series will also include extensive profiles of Jackson, and some of Jordan's key teammates, including Scottie Pippen, Dennis Rodman and Steve Kerr.

NFL briefs

Rams' Allen is first player to reveal a positive virus test

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles Rams center Brian Allen says he tested positive for COVID-19 three weeks ago.

Allen is the first active NFL player to acknowledge testing positive during the coronavirus pandemic.

The third-year pro is not hospitalized and is "feeling good," according to a statement issued by the Rams on Wednesday night only after Allen spoke to Fox Sports about his positive test.

Allen became the team's starting center last season. He played in nine games before missing the rest of the year with a knee injury.

Allen is expected to start at center again this season. He was a fourth-round draft pick out of Michigan State in 2018, playing largely on special teams as a rookie.

The 24-year-old Allen was training and rehabilitating at the Rams' training complex when he began to feel symptoms last month. He told Fox Sports that he lost his sense of smell and taste, and they haven't returned even after his other symptoms abated. New Orleans Saints coach Sean Payton revealed last month that he tested positive for the virus. The Los Angeles Chargers last week revealed a positive test and symptoms for unidentified members of their organization, but the Rams hadn't acknowledged Allen's positive test.

Rams general manager Les Snead and coach Sean McVay both dodged the question last week when asked if any members of the organization had fallen ill.

"Everybody is doing really well," McVay said at the time. "There's been a couple guys that we've had some conversations with, but they're in a good place right now."

Chargers employee tests positive for virus

COSTA MESA, Calif. — At least one member of the Los Angeles Chargers organization has tested positive for the coronavirus and two others have reported symptoms.

Team spokesman Josh Ruppert said in a statement that "everyone is doing well and is on the road to recovery."

Ruppert added that owner Dean Spanos, general manager Tom Telesco and coach Anthony Lynn are fine.

ESPN reported that the first positive diagnosis happened two weeks after the team facility was



DAVID DERMER/AP

Los Angeles Rams center Brian Allen said Wednesday that he tested positive for COVID-19 three weeks ago.

shut down on March 12. Everyone who had been exposed to the infected employee was notified and all self-quarantined.

Packers Hall of Famer Willie Davis dies at 85

Willie Davis, a Pro Football Hall of Fame defensive lineman who helped the Green Bay Packers win each of the first two Super Bowls, has died. He was 85.

The Packers confirmed Davis' death to the Pro Football Hall of Fame on Wednesday, as did his former teammate and fellow hall member, Dave Robinson.

Davis died in a Santa Monica, Calif., hospital. His wife, Carol, told the Packers her husband had been hospitalized for about a month with kidney failure and passed away peacefully.

"The Green Bay Packers family was saddened today to learn about the passing of Willie Davis," said Packers President/CEO Mark Murphy. "One of the great defensive players of his era, Willie was a significant contributor to the Packers' five NFL championship teams during the 1960s."

"I enjoyed getting to know Willie and his wife, Carol, especially when he served as our honorary captain for the 2010 NFC championship game and Super Bowl 45, and again for the 2014 NFC championship game. He also was a great role model for our players, having gone on to a very successful career after football and serving on the Packers Board of Directors."

A 15th-round draft pick from Grambling, Davis began his NFL career by playing both offense and defense for the Cleveland Browns in 1958 and '59.

NFL

Virtual pro day helps overlooked prospects

Football academy hosted event in N.J. for 30 NFL hopefuls as lockdown loomed

BY ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

Hours before New Jersey closed all gyms indefinitely last month because of the COVID-19 global pandemic, 30 NFL Draft hopefuls had had a chance to showcase their talents in a "virtual" pro day at TEST Football Academy in Martinsville.

It was the culmination of countless hours the players had spent training and preparing, both physically and mentally, for their actual pro days that ended up being canceled. None of the players at TEST's virtual pro day attended the NFL combine, so this was their best shot to show what they can do.

"I spent 12 weeks at TEST with 5-6 hours of work a day," said Griffin Clancy, an offensive lineman from the University at Albany. "We were very close to getting our opportunity eliminated because of COVID-19."

But Kevin Dunn, founder and CEO of TEST Sports Clubs, and Geir Gudmundsen, the director of football operations, weren't going to let that happen. They quickly organized the event in anticipation of a nationwide lockdown that forced sports to shut down.

"We just huddled up on Friday the 13th to figure it out," Dunn said. "We had to do something for these guys."

Dunn and Gudmundsen decided to turn their typical, mock pro days into a live event streamed online on Facebook. Players gathered at the facility on March 16 and performed various drills — 40-yard dash, shuttle, three-on-one — for four hours. The video has more than 8,500 views.

"We just tried to make it as authentic and as real as possible and give scouts the opportunity to view the whole thing from where their perspective would be and bring a virtual experience right to their living room," Dunn said. "That was the only way that these kids would have the opportunity. We've sent multiple scouts to our Facebook page because we saved the feed. They've watched it and reached out to us about the times."

TEST uses a laser timing system and Ric Serritella, creator of NFL Draft Bible, registered hand-held timers. Serritella posted the results on his website.

Serritella says he expects 15-20 "non-combine" players to be selected next week, down from the average of about 30 players per draft in previous years.

"Under the circumstances, it went very smooth," said Gudmundsen, a former offensive lineman who signed with the Buffalo Bills as an undrafted rookie in 2005 and played in the Arena



PHOTOS BY TEAM TEST/AP

Above: From left, TEAM TEST Football Academy director of operations Geir Gudmundsen, performance coach Skip Fuller and CEO Kevin Dunn prepare to watch Pace University offensive lineman Matt Snow run the 40-yard dash on March 16 while performance coach Vance Matthews and NFL Draft Bible creator Ric Serritella look on at the school campus in Martinsville, N.J. Below: There were 30 NFL Draft hopefuls who participated in the virtual pro day hours before New Jersey closed all gyms indefinitely because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Football League. "The kids needed another opportunity to be seen. It's huge for kids that might not be drafted or are on the cusp of that."

Clancy, listed at 6-foot-5, 305 pounds, said the numbers he posted were personal bests.

"I just need one shot," he said. "I've always been the underdog in life so I'm not afraid of a challenge. Looking forward to next week and this process."

His agent, JR Rickert, said he's heard from scouts who watched Clancy's performance.

"For a guy like Griffin from a smaller school, you want to get as many opportunities for scouts to see him as possible," Rickert said. "Losing the pro day workout can be a big challenge. For a credible facility like TEST to organize the

virtual pro day and make the content available was a huge help to us. Many scouts have commented to me that they were able to get a sense of how well Griffin moves based on the film."

Greg Liggs, a defensive back from Elon University, flew in the day before TEST's virtual pro day and ran the 40-yard dash in 4.47 seconds.

"With everything going on, this pro day allowed us to display all the hard work we put in since the end of the football season," Liggs said. "Being able to put numbers on tape is a huge win for guys during this time because it gives each player one last fighting shot at making their dreams come true, especially small-school guys like myself. This was a giant win toward making my NFL dreams

Scoreboard

Draft Order

April 23-25

W	Record	Pct	Opponents' record
1. Cincinnati	14 - 0	.125	141 114 1 .553
2. Washington	13 - 0	.188	128 127 1 .502
3. Detroit	12 - 0	.219	130 126 2 .506
4. NY Giants	12 - 0	.219	120 134 2 .473
5. Miami	11 - 0	.313	124 132 0 .484
6. LA Chargers	11 - 0	.313	131 124 1 .514
7. Atlanta	10 - 0	.340	135 120 1 .509
8. Arizona	10 - 1	.344	120 131 0 .529
9. Jacksonville	10 - 0	.375	124 132 0 .484
10. Tennessee	9 - 0	.375	125 121 1 .523
11. NY Jets	7 - 0	.438	121 135 0 .473
12. Raiders	7 - 0	.438	123 132 1 .482
13. San Francisco (from Indianapolis)	7 - 0	.438	120 124 2 .504
14. Tampa Bay	7 - 0	.438	127 127 2 .500
15. Denver	7 - 0	.438	130 125 1 .510
16. Carolina	7 - 0	.438	138 116 1 .505
17. Dallas	8 - 0	.500	122 133 1 .479
18. Miami (from Pittsburgh)	8 - 0	.500	128 127 1 .502
19. Las Vegas (from Chicago)	8 - 0	.500	129 125 2 .508
20. Seattle (from LA Rams)	7 - 0	.563	125 139 2 .505
21. Philadelphia	9 - 0	.563	116 139 1 .455
22. Minnesota (from Buffalo)	10 - 0	.625	121 133 2 .477
23. New England	12 - 0	.625	124 120 0 .669
24. New Orleans	13 - 0	.813	124 131 1 .486
25. Minnesota	10 - 0	.625	121 133 2 .477
26. Houston (from Houston)	10 - 0	.625	135 120 0 .520
27. Seattle	11 - 0	.667	135 119 2 .331
28. Baltimore	14 - 0	.875	126 129 1 .494
29. Tennessee	9 - 0	.563	125 110 0 .488
30. Green Bay	13 - 0	.813	139 126 2 .563
31. San Francisco	13 - 0	.813	128 126 2 .504
32. Kansas City	13 - 0	.750	130 125 1 .510

come true."

NFL agent Cary Fabrikant had five players participate in TEST's pro day.

"It was an awesome opportunity for them to get this time to showcase their talent," Fabrikant said. "NFL scouts have seen the video and are able to take this information and share it with the decision-makers."

Shippensburg University wide receiver Kyle Haines ran a 4.48 40-yard dash and showed off reli-

able hands.

"The virtual pro day was vital for us athletes," Haines said.

Since TEST opened in 1999, Dunn said 253 out of 397 athletes they've trained made it onto a professional football team's roster. Among those were 2013 Super Bowl MVP Joe Flacco, eight-time Pro Bowl cornerback Patrick Peterson, and four-time Pro Bowl fullback Kyle Juszczyk.

Thirty more players are hoping to make that list.

NFL DRAFT



TED S. WARREN/AP

According to Hall of Fame NFL GM Bill Polian and former NFL executive Pat Kirwan, teams like the Seattle Seahawks — where head coach Pete Carroll, pictured, heads an exceptionally strong, veteran personnel staff — could have an even greater advantage than usual as the coronavirus pandemic adversely limits each franchises' preparation ahead of next week's NFL Draft.

Former GMs: Focus on getting little things right

BY BARRY WILNER
Associated Press

Bill Polian ran many an NFL Draft, making him the main man in the room for several successful franchises:

Next week, the Pro Football Hall of Famer knows who the guys in demand will be for all 32 teams: the techs.

"I would say simply, I-T-I-T-I-T," Polian explains. "Make sure from the outset your communication is seamless and flawless. If you can get the name of the pick in on time and can effectuate trades, the rest of it is relatively easy."

"If I were running a club," adds the man who built the Bills, Colts and Panthers through the draft. "I'd take a little more time to make sure I rehearsed everything for the actual draft. We would always make sure all the communications work and everything lines up, but do it all in spades now. Don't take for granted they will work."

The league and teams say they are ensuring that everything will run smoothly, and a mock draft will be held soon as a test. But really, this is uncharted territory. NFL teams are in a sea of uncertainty as they prepare for a draft like no other.

The collection of information has been strong, but hardly as thorough as in normal times. Cancellations of pro days, in-

person visits and workouts at team headquarters, and in-depth medical exams by team doctors adversely affect preparation for each franchise.

That said, Polian and former NFL executive Pat Kirwan point directly to team scouts who, like every other year, were on the road gathering data since last summer. So clubs with the strongest personnel staffs, who usually have an edge

heading into the draft, could have an even bigger advantage now.

But as Kirwan points out, the logistical limitations caused by the coronavirus pandemic could outweigh some of that diligence.

"Trading, which has become a bigger part of the draft than ever, becomes problematic," says Kirwan, who like Polian is an analyst for SiriusXM. "Say we are all in a room and three guys are working phones, trying to get the best deal. The decision maker, he is not going to have the visual contact with them that he usually has. How fast can they respond to make the move?"



Polian

One topic Polian and Kirwan disagree on is actually staging the draft next week. Several general managers had sought a delay into May at least, something the owners shot down quickly. Could there be competitive advantages for some teams by maintaining the status quo?

"It's largely moot because it isn't being pushed back," Polian says. "In a certain sort of offbeat sense, it is probably a good thing to have now. While it is trivial in the extreme compared to what is going on everywhere, it takes people's minds off the news they are hearing."

From a football sense, though, Kirwan wonders why wasn't a potential delay in the NFL's game plan?

"Doing a first-time draft with a coach and GM together, and they don't know each other that well, and now adding all of these technical elements will add more pressure," he says. "I thought we could have moved the draft back until the middle of May and not affected it (adversely)."

"I think it reeks too much of people who never ran a draft. I respect that we are in an entertainment business. But the GMs were told to shut up, basically. I want to know where the impetus was, who thinks the show must go on? It shows a lack of real understanding of the moment."

Perfect: Simmons has ability to line up all over the field on defense

FROM BACK PAGE

derisively — were typically downgraded for their lack of specialization.

Now, adaptability and ambidexterity are attributes.

"I think it's really beneficial for me," Simmons said. "I know years ago it wasn't good to be a position-less guy. But now it's become a benefit for me just because of all the versatility I'll be able to (provide)."

Although he's had some multi-talented predecessors in recent years such as Chargers strong safety Derwin James, there's not been anyone quite like Simmons, who can't even count himself a genuine acolyte of any specific NFL player.

"I don't know if I truly have one person you could compare me to just for all the different things I do," Simmons explained.

That said, he does have a trio of superstar models.

"If I have to go look at film of somebody to get something, it would be Von Miller just for pass rush, Jalen Ramsey for man techniques and Tyrann Mathieu just because he plays around everywhere, as well," Simmons said.

While Mathieu can play anywhere in the back seven, Simmons produced at all three levels on defense at Clemson. He seamlessly transitioned from defending the deep pass to covering tight ends over the middle, thwarting running backs in the box and rushing the passer off the edge.

Playing up to five positions on an afternoon wasn't uncommon nor physically too



MICHAEL CONROY/AP

Clemson standout Isaiah Simmons worked out with the linebackers at February's NFL scouting combine, but ask the 6-foot-4, 238-pounder his natural position and you'll get a quick retort — "defense."

demanding for Simmons.

"The hardest part about it is just the mental aspect, having to know what everybody else has to do," Simmons said. "That was the most complicated thing I had to

deal with. But I learn everything very fast. ... At Clemson our back seven, we all meet in the same room, so I'm able to hear everything all at one time as opposed to having to go from room to room."

He doesn't have a position preference in the NFL.

"I like an interception just as much as I like getting a sack," Simmons said. "I don't think I have a favorite."

Although he worked out with the linebackers at the NFL scouting combine, Simmons had a quick retort for anyone asking what position was in his blood.

"Defense," he'd say with a million-dollar smile.

It's not as if he'll have to choose one position or another in the pros, either.

"He can do anything," Jeremiah said. "... So with a guy like Isaiah Simmons, whether you want to list him as a linebacker or safety, I know you plug him into that defensive scheme and week by week you can deploy him in different ways depending on what the strength of your opponent is."

"That's why he has so much value."

Simmons believes NFL coaches will prove just as creative as Venables and Dabo Swinney in capitalizing on his many skills.

"Mentally I feel like there isn't anything I can't do," Simmons said, suggesting he's the ready product for all those terrific tight ends winning so many mismatches on Sunday afternoons.

"The game is evolving," Simmons said. "Something has to be done to stop these Travis Kelce's and George Kittle's out there."

And he's just the man for the job. Or jobs.

SPORTS



Report: Halladay used drugs, doing 'extreme acrobatics' before crash

MLB, Page 47

NFL DRAFT

The Prototype

Versatile Clemson LB Simmons is perfect fit for modern NFL

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

Several years before building a Super Bowl roster in San Francisco, John Lynch the broadcaster was pining for a new kind of defensive playmaker.

What the NFL needed to counter all the offensive innovations driving up scores, he said back in 2013, was a hybrid linebacker/safety who could stay on the field no matter the down and distance, regardless of the pace or the play.

Some players have started to fit that bill, none the likes of Isaiah Simmons. The 6-foot-4, 238-pound Clemson captain lined up at linebacker, over the slot and in the deep middle for the Tigers. He projects as an even more all-purpose pro.

"Simmons is built for today's NFL," said NFL Media analyst Daniel Jeremiah, "and his role could change week to week, depending on the opponent."

Daniel Jeremiah
NFL Media analyst

Simmons' specialty is his versatility.

"I can fit in anywhere," Simmons said.

Clemson defensive coordinator Brent Venables lined him up all over the field except nose tackle and defensive tackle.

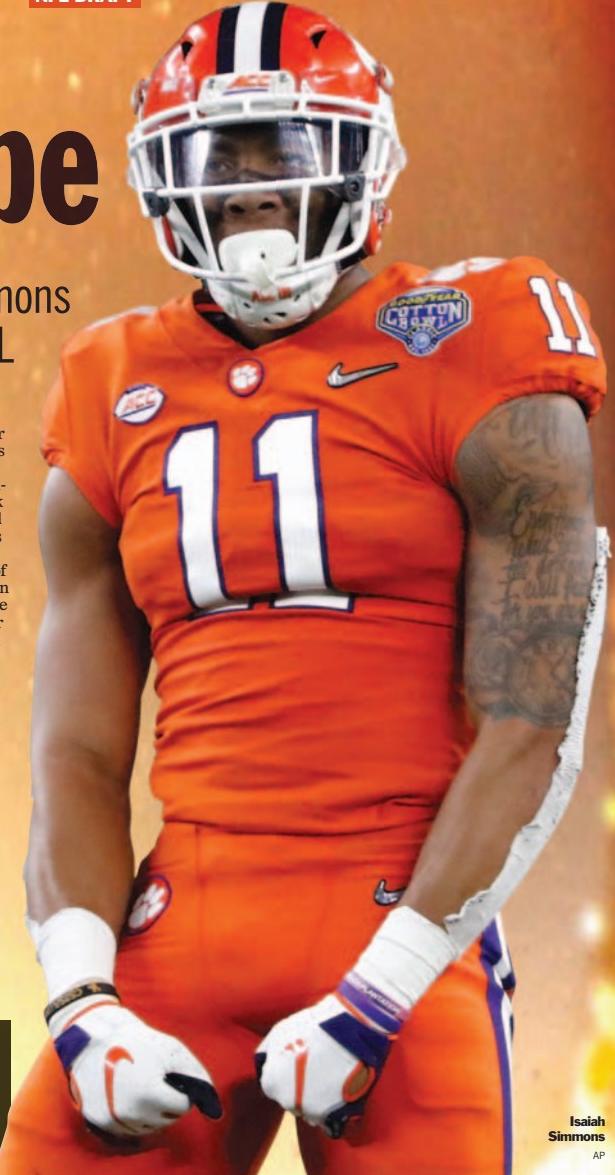
Back in Lynch's playing days and even during most of his time in the broadcast booth, NFL teams leaned toward prototypical prospects who fit the mold as much as the scheme.

"Tweeners," as they were referred to — sometimes

SEE PERFECT ON PAGE 51

Inside:

- Former league exec Polian: Doing little things more important than ever ahead of unconventional NFL Draft, Page 51



Isaiah
Simmons
AP

TO OUR READERS

As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.



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